



















*John A. Morison.*

# JOHN HOPKINS MORISON

## A Memoir



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## PREFACE

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THIS volume has been prepared by Dr. Morison's children. Apart from their regard for their father, there are two reasons why it seems right that a memorial of his life should be preserved.

Dr. Morison was a representative of a class of which there are few left; he was a New Hampshire boy, who, growing up under conditions which would now be thought poverty, but which were entirely free from any of the dependence which is usually associated with poverty, acquired an education and spent the greater part of his life among people of much more general knowledge, but of no greater intellectual capacity, than those with whom his earliest memory was associated.

Dr. Morison lived in every decade of the nineteenth century; he was a Unitarian clergyman whose life covered the whole period of Unitarian Congregationalism, the controversy which resulted in the division of New England Congregationalism taking place while he was receiving his education. But throughout his life Dr. Morison was

more a Christian than a member of any denomination.

The book has been formed as far as possible of selections from Dr. Morison's own words; but in making the selections, things which explained his life and exemplified his thoughts have been chosen, rather than such as on their own merits might be considered the best. The plan of the memoir gives the outward facts of his life, and the man himself so far as he is revealed by the selections from his writings. But those who knew him best must feel that his most striking characteristic could not be fully shown either by the narrative or by the selections. If his character were to be given in the most fitting single word, that word would be "unselfishness." It was not only a life in which generosity was great in proportion to means of gratifying it, and in which the giver gave himself as freely as what was his, but one into which the thought of self seemed never to enter.

Besides other selections, quotations have been made from the three following volumes: "History of the Town of Peterborough, Hillsborough County, New Hampshire," by Albert Smith, M. D., LL. D., Boston, 1876; "The History of the Morison or Morrison Family," by Leonard A. Morri-



son, Boston, 1880 ; “ The History of Windham in New Hampshire (Rockingham County), 1719-1883,” by Leonard A. Morrison, Boston, 1883.

The frontispiece is from a photograph taken in December, 1889 ; the portrait facing page 88 is from a crayon by Cheney, taken in 1842.

PETERBOROUGH, N. H., September 14, 1896.



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# JOHN HOPKINS MORISON

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## I

### ANCESTRY

JOHN HOPKINS MORISON was of pure Scotch descent. His ancestors on both sides of the family were Scotch-Irish, whose residence in Ireland had been comparatively short, and who settled in New Hampshire early in the eighteenth century.

John Morison, his great-great-grandfather, appears to have been born in the county of Aberdeen, in Scotland, in 1628. He moved to Ireland before the siege of Londonderry, and was there during those terrible days in 1689. He emigrated to America about 1720, his son and grandson having preceded him. He settled in Londonderry, N. H., where he died February 16, 1736, at the reputed age of one hundred and eight.

His second son, John Morison, was born in Ireland in 1678. He was one of the first sixteen settlers of Londonderry, N. H., going there in 1719; he lived there till about 1750, when he removed to Peterborough, and was one of the early settlers of

that town. He died in Peterborough, June 14, 1776, aged ninety-eight years. When ten years old, with his parents and family he was in the siege of Londonderry. Late in life he gave an account of the sufferings of that siege to his grandson, Hon. Jeremiah Smith, detailing his experience while watching at a mouse's hole to catch the mouse for food. Judge Smith, when an old man, repeated the same story to the great-great-grandson, John Hopkins Morison, who lived till 1896, this pathetic incident being thus carried down orally by only three lives through more than two centuries.

Thomas Morison, the second son of John Morison, was born in Ireland in 1710, and came to America with his father. He was one of the earliest settlers of Peterborough, though it is uncertain when he came.

In 1743 or 1744 "he began the farm afterwards occupied by him,<sup>1</sup> and built there a camp against a large boulder, having a perpendicular side on the east of six or seven feet height, against which the camp was constructed and the camp-fire built. The party went from Lunenburg on foot, with axes, packs of provisions, and cooking-utensils on their backs, threading their way through the unfrequented forests, guided by blazed trees. The large boulder served, with its vertical face, to shelter and

<sup>1</sup> Now owned by George S. Morison.

support the camp, and furnished it with a fireplace and chimney. It is related in a manuscript account of this affair that, when they went out one morning, they perceived two Indian men, a squaw, and a small Indian. They intended to be friendly and spoke to them, and invited them to take breakfast with them, which they did. After the departure of the Indians they went out to their work, but when they returned for dinner they found that the Indians had stolen every mouthful of their eatables and disappeared. They immediately set out for Townsend [about twenty-five miles], not being able to obtain the least sustenance till they reached that place. They went again to Peterborough in the fall or winter, at which time all the inhabitants were frightened away and left the town till 1749. In 1749 Morison returned to Peterborough, and built a house of hard-pine logs ten inches square, into which he moved his family in the fall of 1750. He resided on his farm till his death, November 23, 1797, aged eighty-seven years. Thomas Morison and William Smith, and they only, are always styled, in Peterborough town records, 'gentlemen.' He was universally known as Capt. Thomas Morison, and marched his company on one occasion to Keene, twenty miles, through the woods, on a false alarm that the Indians had attacked that place." <sup>1</sup>

Thomas Morison married Mary Smith, while his sister Elizabeth married her brother, William

<sup>1</sup> *History of the Morison Family*, p. 134.

Smith. The result was two families of identical blood. Hon. Jeremiah Smith was one of the sons of William and Elizabeth Smith; his brothers, Samuel and John, though less known beyond the limits of Peterborough, were equally esteemed there.

Robert, the second son and third child of Thomas Morison, was born in Lunenburg, Mass., in 1744. He came to Peterborough with his father, and subsequently occupied and owned the farm which his grandfather, John Morison, had occupied. He married Elizabeth Holmes. He was a deacon in the Presbyterian Church. In 1791 his house was burned and the church records destroyed; in the same year he built on a different site a house which is still standing and in which John Hopkins Morison was born. He died in 1826, aged eighty-two years.

Nathaniel Morison, the third son of Deacon Robert Morison, and the oldest who survived infancy, was born in Peterborough, October 9, 1779. His life is best described by giving in full an account sent by his son, the subject of this memoir, to Dr. Albert Smith in 1876, and printed in Dr. Smith's History of Peterborough.

“Of my ancestors on my father's side beyond John Morison, my grandfather's grandfather, I



know nothing. He lived to be ninety-eight years old. For many years he was looked up to with great respect by the younger members of the family. From what I could learn, I have inferred that he was a man of sound judgment, of a mild disposition, and a natural dignity of character, a man to command the confidence of others. The account which I gave of him in the Centennial was taken from the recollections of his two grandchildren, Jeremiah Smith and Sally Morison, both of whom had very distinct and pleasant recollections of him as, more than any one else, the patriarch of the town.

“His son, Capt. Thomas Morison, was a more enterprising and ambitious man, with greater activity of mind and greater force of character. These more efficient traits were ascribed to his mother, Margaret Wallace, who wished her house, if it must be a log-house, to be a log higher than any other in the place. During the active period of his life he was, I suppose, one of the five or six leading men in Peterborough.

“His sons were none of them remarkable men. Three of his daughters, Polly, Sally, and Mrs. Wallace, were uncommonly intelligent. My grandfather, Robert Morison, was a man of good sense, but of moderate ability. He was a very devout man. I have seen many of his letters to my father that were marked by a degree of practical good judgment which I fear he did not know how to apply to his own affairs ; for he was always in debt, and always appealing to my father for pecuniary assistance.

“My father, Nathaniel Morison, was the only one of his children who had more than ordinary ability. Ezekiel, his youngest son, was a man of correct and industrious habits ; he died young in Mississippi. Nathaniel was born October 11, 1779. In 1802 he went with an invoice of chairs to some place in the West Indies, but finding no market for them there he took them to Wilmington, N. C. After disposing of them he went to Fayetteville, in the same State, and entered into the business of making carriages. In 1804 he came to New England and married Mary Ann Hopkins, who was born in that part of Londonderry which is now Windham, and returned to his business in Fayetteville with his wife, where he remained till 1807. Then, at the urgent solicitation of his father, he came back to Peterborough, and settled down with his wife and daughter, having bought his father’s farm. He brought with him five thousand dollars in specie, and there were still considerable sums of money due him at the South. In five years he had laid up between six and seven thousand dollars. He was not fitted to be a farmer. The success of a more extended enterprise, and the habits formed in a different sphere, made him restless under its slow and limited operations. In 1811, I believe, he returned to Fayetteville to settle up his affairs there, and when he returned he brought with him John H. Steele,<sup>1</sup> a young man whom he had found there, and consid-

<sup>1</sup> John H. Steele was Governor of New Hampshire in 1844 and 1845; one of his Thanksgiving proclamations was written by J. H. Morison.

ered a very ingenious and capable mechanic, and who afterwards filled so important a place in Peterborough. Three or four years more passed by, when he purchased for ten thousand dollars what was then called the South Factory, and devoted all his energies to that and kindred enterprises. He put up a building for the manufacture of fine linen, particularly table-cloths. The women in Peterborough and the neighboring towns were famous for their labors at the distaff. The object of this new undertaking was to weave, by improved processes, the linen yarn that was spun in the vicinity. The looms were worked by hand, but with what was called a spring shuttle, then a new invention. In connection with these factories my father, now a militia captain, opened a small store, and he had upon his hands all that he could attend to.

“But he had chosen an unfortunate time for these investments. The war with England was soon over. The country was flooded with foreign goods. There was no sale for our domestic products. The factories were closed. His little competence melted away. He was embarrassed with debts. His farm and factory property were heavily mortgaged. For all industrial enterprises, the term from 1815 to 1820 was a period of greater depression than any other period of five years during the present century. After struggling in vain with adverse events, and with embarrassments which were constantly increasing, he went to Mississippi, in the fall of 1817, to collect a considerable debt that was due him there. He carried out with him

a few cases of axes and shoes, which he disposed of at a good profit. He collected his debt so as to reach home in the spring of 1818.

“While he was in Natchez, he became acquainted with several gentlemen of large fortunes, and made a contract with them to supply the city with water by means of lead pipes for \$30,000. On reaching home he engaged a competent man in New Hampshire to lay the pipes, and in the autumn of 1818 he went out with a larger supply of axes, ploughs, and shoes. But the boat which carried a part of his merchandise struck a snag and sunk in the Mississippi; and when he reached Natchez, and had made all his arrangements and got his men and materials there to supply the city with water, the Southern gentlemen repudiated the contract which he supposed they had made, and the whole enterprisc, with consequences ruinous to all his hopes, was thrown back upon him. He had recourse again to his old occupation, and endeavored to gain a little money by working as a wheelwright and carriage-maker. But disappointment, anxiety, and the hot, malarious summer climate there were too much for him. He was taken down by the yellow fever, and after a few days of severe suffering, in which he was carefully attended by his brother Ezekiel, and his townsman, John Scott, Jr., he died on the 11th day of September, 1819, just before he had completed his fortieth year. Rumors of his death had already reached us, when, on a cold, cloudy, November Saturday afternoon, I, then a boy of eleven, walked to the village to

see if any letter had come by the mail. On entering your father's store just before dark, I heard the people talking of the report, and, as they did not know me, they kept on with their conversation till I had received the letter. I had a sad journey home in the dark night, and the burst of grief with which the first line of the letter was greeted was more than I could bear. The next morning my grandfather called us all together to prayers as the custom was of a Sunday morning, and I shall never forget the solemnity and pathos with which the old man, with trembling hands and a voice broken with emotion, read the third chapter of Lamentations: 'I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath. He hath led me, and brought me into darkness, but not into light.'

"A month or two before, when news of the falling through of the Natchez enterprise had reached this part of the country, the sheriff had come to our house and taken possession of everything that the law allowed him to take. The sharpest pang that I felt at that time was in witnessing my mother's anguish, and, next to that, was when I saw the officers of the law drive away a pair of young steers that I had watched over and tended and fondled ever since they were born. I did not see them again for three years, and it was very painful to me then to find that I could not get from them any sign of affection or recognition. They had entirely forgotten me. After my father's death, we remained in the old homestead through the winter till March or April, 1820. My mother



had for her portion a shell of a house near the South Factory and eight hundred dollars. It required half the money to convert the 'old weaving-shop' into a tolerable residence. I remember well the earnest gaze and the deep sigh with which, on leaving our early home, where all her children but one had been born, she looked back upon it, with a baby on each arm, and then turned slowly away towards her new home. She had been left alone in the fall of 1818 with seven children, the oldest thirteen years, and the two youngest four months old. All her means of support consisted of a half-finished house, two cows, and four or five hundred dollars. She had a most delicate, sensitive nature, but a force of will and an amount of executive energy such as I have never seen surpassed. In my remembrance of her, as she was during the early period of her widowhood, I always think of her sitting at her loom, working and weeping. She did not stop to indulge in discouraging apprehensions, but emphasized her grief by driving her shuttle with increased promptness and vehemence. With a resolution that almost broke her heart, she put her two oldest boys, one eleven and the other nine years old, into farmers' families to work for their living. Lessons of honest industry and helpfulness and self-dependence were thus learned. If there was a great deal of suffering on their part and on hers, caused by severe labor and a divided household, habits were formed which contributed largely to whatever measure of usefulness or success they may have attained. The heaviest burden

rested upon our oldest sister, whose ability and willingness to help all the rest shut her out from the advantages of education which the others enjoyed.

“My father was endowed with abilities ill adapted to his calling, and very much beyond what was required by the sphere in which he lived. He read the best books with a keen delight. The few letters of his which I have seen showed marks of a mental strength and culture superior to what we usually find in the correspondence even of the city merchants who lived at that time. Your uncle John, who was his teacher one winter, spoke to his brother Jeremiah of his mind, and his ingenuous, truthful qualities, with a sort of enthusiastic admiration. If he could have had the educational advantages which his sons enjoyed, I have no doubt that he would have been one of the most distinguished among all the natives of Peterborough. As it was, his lot was a very hard one, and his life very sad. He was a man of delicate sensibilities and generous impulses. He was fitted for intellectual pursuits, and would have made an admirable lawyer. But he had no special aptness for mechanical employments or for trade. His thoughts moved in a different sphere. I have heard his social and conversational qualities very highly spoken of. But he had no special aptitude or taste for the sort of life that was put upon him. After the success of his early days, which certainly indicated no common ability even in uncongenial pursuits, he failed in almost everything that he under-

took. His plan for introducing improved methods of manufacturing linen cloth showed originality of mind and no lack of judgment. Nor could any one situated as he was be likely to anticipate the disastrous effects of peace on our domestic industries. And no honorable man would suspect the arbitrary repudiation of a contract like that which he had made in Natchez.<sup>1</sup> But the disappointment was not on that account any the less severe to him. He became disheartened and unhappy. He was never, I think, according to the ideas then prevailing, an intemperate man, but amid his disappointments and trials he probably fell in too much with the habits of those around him. Indeed, when I look at his ledger and see what quantities of rum and toddy almost everybody drank in those days, I wonder how it was that any one could have been saved from being a drunkard. My mother was so impressed with a sense of the evils and perils in this direction, and warned her children against them with such intensity of feeling, that I have no doubt she had seen, in her home, influences and dangers which we were not old enough to understand. In common with almost every woman around her, she used snuff; but from her own experience, and what she saw in others of the misery of such a bondage, she had a violent antipathy to it, and brought up her children with such a feeling against it that not one of her five sons has ever, I believe, used an ounce of tobacco.

<sup>1</sup> In justice to the people of Natchez, it should be said that the contract was not put in writing.



“ My mother’s father, John Hopkins, was a shoemaker.<sup>1</sup> He was a man of an easy, happy temperament, who, it is said, would sit at work on his shoemaker’s bench in winter, and sing Scotch songs all day long without repeating a single song. His wife, however, Isabella Reid, was of a very different temperament, and belonged to a family of very marked and powerful characteristics. She was a woman of strong convictions, and of great energy of mind and body. She, like her daughter Mary Ann, could do two or three days’ work in one, and had no patience with the idleness or inefficiency of other people. She probably did for the Hopkinses what Margaret Wallace had done for the Morisons three generations before, and introduced into the race a much more energetic type of character. She lived to a great age [only 83], with her son James Hopkins, in Antrim. I remember her prompt and decisive interference on two or three occasions at my father’s. Once, when I was a very young boy, I took a small amount of honey from one of our beehives, and escaped without injury. But when the experiment was tried a second time, it seemed to me as if the whole swarm of bees, with their stings in active exercise, had settled down on my head. Instantly, on hearing the cries

<sup>1</sup> This is the original word used by Mr. Morison in his letter to Dr. Smith. In the *History of Peterborough* this word “shoemaker” was changed at the request of his brother, N. H. Morison, to “farmer.” John Hopkins owned and worked his own farm in Windham; he had also learned the shoemaker’s trade, and had his shoemaker’s bench at his own house.

sent out by the child, my grandmother appeared with a bowl of water and quickly drove away my offended avengers of their rights.<sup>1</sup> Not long before her death I saw her in Antrim. She was very feeble and very kind. Just before I left her, she unlocked a private drawer, and took from it two silver half-dollars, which she asked me to give to my mother. I was greatly affected by her kindness, for it was probably nearly all the money that she had.

“Here is a very slight sketch of those who have gone before us, and whose lives are transmitted through our veins to those who shall come after us. I believe in inherited qualities, but it is difficult to reconcile with this belief the very different qualities of those who inherit the same blood. For example, your grandfather, William Smith, and his wife, Elizabeth Morison, were the brother and sister of my great-grandmother, Mary Smith, and her husband, Thomas Morison. The blood in the two families was the same, and the circumstances under which they entered life were substantially the same. Yet every one of the six sons of William Smith was a man of marked ability, and not one of the sons of Thomas Morison was much, if at all, above mediocrity. Samuel was a shrewd, thrifty man, but that was all. Three of the daughters of Thomas Morison, however, were uncommon women.

<sup>1</sup> On his return from Europe in 1876, Dr. Morison brought with him a photograph of a drawing by Albert Dürer of Cupid fleeing from a hive of bees to the protection of his beautiful mother, which he had bought in memory of this event.

Mary — the Aunt Polly who was so long in your father's store — was, I suppose, one of the most brilliant women ever born in Peterborough. Her sister Sally was, as Judge Smith used to say, a born lady. Her intellectual and moral qualities, and delicate, womanly susceptibilities, were admirably harmonized. She took snuff and smoked a pipe, and yet no one could meet her or talk with her without feeling that she was a refined and delicate woman. Margaret, the wife of Matthew Wallace, was said to be a woman of uncommon ability.

“ We sometimes seem to recognize different ancestors in our different moods and feelings at different times. When I am indulging in the thought of projects vastly beyond my ability to carry out, I feel my great-great-grandmother, the ambitious Margaret Wallace, stirring my blood, and call to mind my grandfather's caution to his son to remember that his name was Morison, and not undertake more than he could do. When I feel very much fixed in any decision, and unwilling to be reasoned out of it, right or wrong, I feel something of the Holmes obstinacy rising up within my veins. When I am in an easy, indolent mood, and disposed to let the day go by without effort in pleasant dreams, I think of my grandfather Hopkins, whose name I bear, and his Scotch songs. If I ever succeed in stripping off its surroundings, and looking calmly and clearly into a difficult and important subject without prejudice on either side, I rejoice to feel that I have in me something of the mild, unbiased good sense which has come down

from the Smiths as they were before they were united with the Morisons. In this way I lead different lives, and feel myself swayed by widely different impulses, and brought under the influence of different ancestors, according to the mood that happens to be uppermost. Sometimes I feel as if I were my father, looking out from his eyes and walking in his gait; and then I detect the mother in the earnestness with which I find myself gazing on some person before me, as your uncle, Judge Smith, seemed to see his sister Betty when he put on her cap and looked at himself in the glass.”<sup>1</sup>

It seemed as if every circumstance combined to render the failure and death of his father particularly sad. The parting of the father from his family had been pathetic; he was too much affected to bid them good-by, but walked off alone, leaving a wagon to follow which overtook him and carried him on. More than seventy years after this departure of his father, on the day of the opening of the bridge across the Mississippi River at Memphis, Tenn., in May, 1892, he wrote to his oldest son, the chief engineer of the bridge:—

“One thing which you may not have thought of has been pressing itself on my mind with a deep and tender pathos. Some hundreds of miles below Memphis, on the left bank of the same great river which has been the scene of your successful labor

<sup>1</sup> *History of Peterborough*, pp. 179\*–186\*.

and triumph, is the now unknown grave of my father, who ended his short life at Natchez. He went out to fulfill a contract which he hoped would enable him to live in comfort. But the contract was repudiated. He strove hopelessly for something better, and died bitterly disappointed, knowing that he was leaving his family of seven young children, with their mother, in what seemed to be helpless and hopeless poverty. The contrast between my father and my son in their experiences on the border of that mighty river has been constantly in my mind with its extremes of darkness and light."

Nathaniel Morison married, September 13, 1804, Mary Ann Hopkins, of Londonderry. They had seven children, five sons and two daughters, all of whom lived to mature age and have left descendants. John Hopkins Morison was their second child and the oldest son.

John Hopkins, the grandfather of Mary Ann, came with his wife and children from Ireland in 1730 and settled in Londonderry, where his son of the same name was born March 10, 1739. The second John Hopkins married Isabella Reid. Mary Ann was their daughter, and by her marriage Polly Hopkins became Mary Morison. She survived her husband nearly thirty years, and died at the home of her daughter in Medina, Michigan, August 22, 1848. No mother was ever more revered by her



children. The following account, prepared by her third son, Nathaniel Holmes Morison, is given here almost in full, though to some degree a repetition of what the older brother had written of his father : —

“Mary Ann (Hopkins) Morison, daughter of John Hopkins and Isabella Reid, was born in Windham, September 8, 1779. She was the twin sister of Betsey Ann Hopkins, born two days later, who married Dea. James Gregg. Her youth was passed at home in the household occupations of a farmer’s daughter, cooking, spinning, weaving, and the care of the dairy, in all of which she excelled. She was said to be the most skilled and rapid spinner of flax in the town. The large willow-tree, still standing near the site of the old homestead, was the scene of many a contest in spinning between the twin sisters and the young maidens of the neighborhood. A platform had been constructed among its branches, and the wheels were often taken there for these trials of skill. Ann, as she was called by the family, was also a bold and skillful rider, and, mounted on her horse, with wheel and flax, she often visited the neighboring farms on summer afternoons for a social chat or a spinning-match with the young girls of her own age. She often said that she had only three weeks of regular schooling ; but her own efforts and those of her parents made up for this deficiency, and her education was quite up to the standard of her day. She was never a great reader like her husband, but

she was always fond of listening to reading, whether from the Bible, history, or the lighter literature of the time, and she always had the highest respect for learning.

“As a young girl and woman she was considered very beautiful, being tall with rather small features and a fine figure. She was said to be the belle of the dancing-school, and her fame for grace and beauty spread far beyond the limits of her native town. She also had a fine ear for music and a good voice. Her father was the best song-singer of his day, and his daughter inherited his taste and his talent. She became the life of social gatherings, singing with great spirit and with touching sympathy the old Scotch ballads and songs of her race, and at a later day the patriotic songs of the new country, especially those written on the naval battles of the war of 1812-15. After leading the life of a country belle through all her early womanhood, she married, September 13, 1804, at the age of twenty-five, Nathaniel Morison, of Peterborough, who was just a month and a day younger than herself.

“Her husband had established himself two years before at Fayetteville, N. C., as a successful manufacturer of carriages, and had returned from that distant city to claim his promised bride. Immediately after the marriage, they set out on horseback for Salem, Mass., where they embarked on a small sailing-vessel for their new home. They remained in Fayetteville, where their oldest child was born, for three years, till 1807, when they

returned to the North, with what was regarded in those days as a competent fortune, and settled in Peterborough, on the homestead of the family. A few years later her husband purchased the South Factory, with its boarding-houses and store, still retaining his farm and living upon it. This purchase proved disastrous financially. To collect some old debts and to retrieve his fortune, he went to Mississippi in 1817, where he made a contract with some leading capitalists of Natchez to introduce water into that city. On returning to the South in 1818 with men and materials for the work, he was astonished to find that his principals, without the slightest notice to him, had changed their mind, and now repudiated the contract they had solemnly made the year before. Confounded, disheartened, and financially ruined by this breach of faith, he became an easy prey to the yellow fever, then prevalent in that region, and died at Natchez, September 11, 1819, in the fortieth year of his age.

“The family estate had been heavily mortgaged to raise funds for his great undertaking in Mississippi, and factory, store, houses, lands, stock, and machinery were all seized to satisfy the demands of creditors. Mrs. Morison, reduced at once from affluence to poverty, bore her misfortunes with wonderful courage and fortitude. Left with seven children, five sons and two daughters, the oldest a daughter of fourteen, and the youngest twins of a year, she had no property but her widow's dower with which to support and educate this large and



helpless family. In the settlement of the estate, a shell of a house was assigned to her in the Southern Village, with two cows, a few acres for grass, a few more for wood, and \$800 in money, a considerable part of which had to be spent in converting the house into a comfortable dwelling. . . . She put her two oldest boys, one eleven, the other nine years old, into farmers' families to work for their living. She pursued the same course with her three younger boys as soon as they were old enough to be useful on a farm, and the help of her two daughters was utilized in the most effective manner. The whole household was busy in useful industry to earn their daily bread and make their home comfortable and pleasant. Her brother, James Hopkins, Esq., of Antrim, had looked after her interests during the trying scenes that followed the death of her husband, and he took charge of her little fund of money, which was carefully husbanded; and its expenditure was sparingly spread over all the years of her children's dependence upon her.

"She was an expert weaver, and her chief income was derived from weaving for the neighboring farmers, the usual price being six cents a yard. She employed the girls and younger children in winding the spools and quills, while the shuttle flew with a rapidity seldom equaled on a handloom. She would sometimes weave as many as thirty yards in a day, besides attending to all her household duties. She also wove quilts and the most beautiful figured linens, such as table-cloths

of complicated patterns, sometimes using as many as twelve treadles. Towards the close of her life, when entirely easy in her circumstances, she spun and wove a heavy counterpane of a beautiful variegated pattern, and with a heavy fringe, for each of her seven children, doing the entire work herself.

“ Her great desire for her sons was to give them the best education that the country schools could afford, and a good trade ; but the love of knowledge inherited from their father, and the energy derived from both parents, carried four of them through Harvard College, and raised them to positions of honor, responsibility, and usefulness that she had never dreamed possible. She at one time used snuff, but she gave up the habit, and so impressed the minds of her sons with its evil effects on purse and health that not one of them ever used an ounce of tobacco. She lived to see all [but one] of her children happily married, and the last years of her life were as beautiful, serene, and happy as its middle course had been hard and trying. Her younger daughter, a delicate, refined, and cultivated woman, with much of her mother’s energy of character, had married and moved to a log-cabin in the wilds of Michigan. The severe trials of frontier life had broken her health and threatened her life. In the fall of 1846 her mother went out to see and to help her, with no knowledge of the fevers of that new country, almost sure to be fatal to a person of her age. She brought to the heart of her invalid daughter all the comfort she expected to give ; but in the sum-

mer of 1848 she took the malarial fever so fatal to elderly persons, and after a few days' sickness, died at Medina, Mich., August 27, at the age of sixty-nine. She was a woman of uncommon energy, decision, and perseverance, with a large fund of common sense to guide and control her, with broad views, high aims, and a loving heart; and 'her children arise up and call her blessed.'"<sup>1</sup>

The autograph signatures of the second John Morison and his son Captain Thomas Morison show the name spelled distinctly Morison; on their gravestones in the old Peterborough graveyard the name is spelled Morrison. The signatures of Deacon Robert Morison and his son Nathaniel show the name spelt Morrison, though in at least one instance the latter spelt it Morison. John Hopkins Morison restored the old spelling, and the name was spelt by him and all his brothers and their descendants in the same way that it was spelt in the earliest records. Mr. Leonard A. Morrison, the historian of the Morison family in America, writes:—

"In early days, the family in Scotland, England, Ireland, and America almost invariably spelled their name with one r, thus: Morison. This was the customary orthography till about the year 1800, when the change to Morrison became general in Scotland, England, Ireland, and Amer-

<sup>1</sup> *History of Windham*, pp. 675-678.

ica, and has continued to the present time. The family in Londonderry, N. H., followed the general custom. . . . Morison is the original mode of spelling. It comes nearer the supposed derivation of the name, and appears to be the correct orthography.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *History of the Morison Family*, p. 20.

## II

### EARLY LIFE

JOHN HOPKINS MORISON was born in the house which his grandfather had built in 1791, and which now belongs to the family of his brother Horace, in the southwest part of Peterborough, on the 25th of July, 1808. He was given the name of his mother's father and grandfather, the name most appropriate for a first-born son. His early childhood, while he had as many comforts as the other children of the town, was one of hardship compared with the life of to-day. His allowance of shoes was one pair a year, and from the time that they wore out in the spring till the next pair was supplied, late in the fall, he went barefoot. Peterborough was then almost entirely a farming town. The older people still spoke the Scotch brogue. The South School which he attended had over sixty scholars. In 1876 he wrote : —

“At the age of three I began to attend school in the summer, but after I was six years old my services on the farm were thought too valuable to be dispensed with, and, from that time forth till I was sixteen, I went to school only in the winter, from eight to twelve weeks in a year.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *History of Peterborough*, p. 186\*.

Few New England towns have more natural beauty than Peterborough. The original township was laid out six miles square, the Contoocook River running nearly through the centre. On the west of the valley rises the Monadnoc, which was generally known as the Grand Monadnoc. On the east rise two hills, commonly called in Peterborough the East Mountains, but formerly known as the Petty Monadnocs; to the north, Kearsarge is visible in the distance. While the plain country people talked little of these surroundings, the boy felt an influence which he did not express. The old meeting-house was on a high hill about three miles from his home. After the New England fashion, a single building served for both church and town hall: it was a square, frame structure; the pews were square, with hinged seats that were lifted when the congregation stood during prayers, and with a little top rail supported by rungs, which the children could turn with their hands, and which would sometimes squeak. There were galleries, and a high pulpit with a sounding-board; there was no steeple, and the building was never painted. The meeting-house had a commanding view of the Grand Monadnoc and the other hills: the boy thought of the scene as like the mountains round about Jerusalem. Here were



held the services on Sunday to which the whole family went. Not far from the meeting-house was the old graveyard of the town, where three generations of the boy's ancestors were buried ; and hard by stood an old beech-tree, of which a brilliant son of Peterborough has said : —

“Many are the noble resolutions that young minds have formed under the shade of the old beech-tree. Intellectual indolence is the prevailing fault of our times. Under the old beech, in my young days, the great and the talented men of this town used to assemble, and there discuss with distinguished power and ability the most important topics. Religion, politics, literature, agriculture, and various other important subjects were there discussed. Well, distinctly well, do I remember those debates, carried on by the Smiths, the Morisons, the Steeles, the Holmeses, the Robbes, the Scotts, the Todds, the Millers, and, perhaps I may be excused here for adding, the Wilsons and others. No absurd proposition or ridiculous idea escaped exposure for a single moment. A debater there had to draw himself up close, be nice in his logic and correct in his language, to command respectful attention. Abler discussion was never listened to anywhere.”<sup>1</sup>

An important religious influence was a little private Sunday-school kept in a deserted house near his home by Fanny Smith, the granddaughter

<sup>1</sup> Gen. James Wilson at Peterborough Centennial Dinner.

of William Smith, who walked over from a neighboring town every week. She was a talented but eccentric woman, very Orthodox in her views, but she gave her pupils the choice between the New Testament and the Westminster Catechism; the boy chose the former, and committed to memory a large part of the New Testament. In her later years she became deeply interested in the anti-slavery movement, and her Calvinism was mollified. Late in life she went one Sunday to the church where the boy whom she had once instructed preached, and after the service she came and told him that she could hear nothing, but that his gestures reminded her of his great-grandfather. She died in 1858, and left by her will a sum of money to erect a monument over her grave, on three respective sides of which were to be placed the names of her great-grandfather's children, her grandfather's children, and her father's children, her own name appearing only among the latter, while the fourth side was to contain these words: —

“This side of the column is devoted to the sacred cause of Emancipation. May God bless it, and all the people say, Amen!”

This monument, erected nearly three years before the war, stands over her grave in the Peterborough village graveyard.



On the death of his father his home life came to an end, and at the age of eleven the boy began earning his own living. Of this period he writes : —

“In the autumn of 1819 my father died, and his family was left in great affliction, and in very straitened circumstances. From 1820 to 1824, I lived with different farmers in the town, working hard, faring as well as they did, and receiving but scanty wages, never, I think, more than fifty dollars a year, even when I did nearly a man’s work. I look back upon those four years as the most unhappy period of my life. The change from our own home to a place with strangers was a painful one, not because I was treated unkindly, but from a feeling that I was fatherless and homeless, and from a longing for a better companionship and better means of education. My principal solace was to spend the Sunday, once in a month or two, at my mother’s house. My greatest happiness intellectually was in reading, often by firelight, with my head in a perilously hot place. The books which I enjoyed most were the Bible, Rollin’s Ancient History, Gibbon’s Rome, and an odd volume or two of Josephus. The little Social Library kept by Mr. Daniel Abbot was a great resource to me.”<sup>1</sup>

He lived with four farmers in different parts of Peterborough. The life was not only hard and rough, but he sometimes met meanness, hypocrisy,

<sup>1</sup> *History of Peterborough*, p. 187\*.

and coarseness, from which even his boyish mind revolted. Mr. Gibbs, the last man with whom he lived, carried the mail between Portsmouth and Brattleboro. The boy saw an advertisement in an "Exeter News-letter" of a vacant place in a store in Exeter. In the hope of relief from the hard life he was living, he asked the mail-carrier to apply for the situation for him, and he obtained it. He was to work in Mr. Joseph Smith Gilman's store and live in his family. He soon found that he had exchanged the rough country life for even more repulsive surroundings: he had neither taste nor aptitude for the work of the store, and, though he lived in Mr. Gilman's family, he was at first placed among the servants; but he had entered on the course of events which was to shape his whole life, as well as the lives of all his brothers. It was one of those cases where extreme poverty made results possible which a boy of moderate means could not have reached. Many years after, he wrote to one of his sons that if his father had lived he probably never would have received an education. The intimate friend of his childhood was a boy named James Moore, the son of a neighboring farmer. He often contrasted the fate of this boy with his own. James Moore was very anxious to go to college, but his father felt that he could not send him.

While still under twenty he left home, crossed the Alleghenies, worked his way down the Mississippi River, sailed from New Orleans, and died at sea.

The removal to Exeter changed the entire life of the boy. Of this period he wrote : —

“ In October, 1824, I went to Exeter and lived there with Mr. Joseph Smith Gilman, ‘ tending ’ in a small grocery store, and doing what a boy might be expected to do about the place, for ten months. The position and most of its duties were distasteful to me. I made some ludicrous and embarrassing mistakes. I was not good at a bargain, and my heart was not in my work. I was more homesick than I had ever been. I wondered then, and have not ceased to wonder yet, at Mr. Gilman’s forbearance. He and his family were very kind to me, and I shall never think of them otherwise than with profound gratitude. But the young people whom I was thrown in with were more ignorant, and had lower tastes and aims in life than any persons I ever knew ; but I had a good deal of time for reading and plenty of books. Before leaving Peterborough I had for six weeks attended a private school kept by Mr. Addison Brown, then a student in Harvard College. He had very rare gifts as a teacher. I felt that my intellectual nature was then for the first time waked up, and life assumed for me a new meaning. During the winter in Exeter I attended an evening school taught by Mr. Richard Hildreth, a man of fine genius, who took great interest in my

studies. My progress with him was such that he and Mr. Gilman, the next summer, called the attention of Dr. Abbot, the admirable principal of Phillips Exeter Academy, to my case, and, without any application on my part, I was allowed to take a place among the beneficiaries of the school.”<sup>1</sup>

On the fly-leaf of an old copy of Playfair’s Euclid are written these words : —

“Had it not been for this book I should probably never have gone to College.

“J. H. M.”

This book was used in the evening school, and his interest in this study called the attention to him which resulted in his getting an education. It would perhaps have been equally correct to say that but for this book none of his family would ever have entered college.

In 1825, at the age of seventeen, he entered the Phillips Exeter Academy on the charity foundation. He always regarded the years spent at Exeter as among the very happiest of his life. Of this period he wrote : —

“Here a new world was opening before me. Every branch of study seemed to offer a new delight. Even the primary elements of Latin and Greek had for me a singular fascination, and every step was an advance into a sort of fairy-land. I

<sup>1</sup> *History of Peterborough*, p. 187\*.

shall never forget the sensations of keen enjoyment with which I read the Odes of Horace, the Iliad of Homer, the Bucolics of Virgil and of Theocritus, or the utter absorption of mind with which I went through the higher branches of Algebra and Geometry, and, most of all, the Conic Sections. I remained in the academy four years, three as a scholar and one mostly as a teacher, pursuing my sophomore studies by myself. I owe a great debt of gratitude to the teachers there, especially to Dr. Abbot and Dr. Soule.”<sup>1</sup>

While in Exeter Academy he kept a somewhat irregular diary, combining a narrative with sentimental essays, which were probably more common then than they are now. The fly-leaf of this diary contains the following : —

“ At the general court, held within the precincts of John H. Morrison, in the town of Peterborough, county of Hillsborough and State of New Hampshire, after very eloquent orations being given by Messrs. Reason, Improvement, Indolence, and their constituents, Proper improvement of time, Diligence, Industry, Good sense, Ease, etc. ;

“ Voted, that J. H. Morrison from the 22d day of May A. D. 1826, keep a memorandum true and faithful.

“ Attest

Observant

*Clerk.*”

While at Exeter he was in the habit of visiting

<sup>1</sup> *History of Peterborough*, p. 187\*.

his mother at Peterborough, usually walking each way, a distance of sixty miles. The diary begins with one of these walks : —

“May 22, 1826. Prosecuted my journey, and arrived at Exeter, where I found all well, at two in the afternoon. I cannot in justice pass over a person whom I fell in with upon the road. He was a peddler, a foreigner, and, as he said, belonged to Salem. He appeared to be a man of a generous disposition; said his object was to do as he would be done by, which precept, so far as I saw, was admirably exemplified in him. Board at Rev. Mr. Holt's. My circumstances now are truly discouraging. I have gone too far to fall back, and yet possess no means of going farther. I am fourteen dollars in debt, without a dollar, and without any certain means of obtaining a dollar. My destiny is wholly dependent upon charity; yet what encouragement has any one ‘to give’ in such a case? It is, I think, extremely doubtful whether I obtain my object, but I do not yet despond. I will keep hope till there's cause for none.

“23. Attended school, — first day of the term; little done but to regulate the studies for the term. My studies are Cicero and the Greek grammar. Cicero I begin at the third oration, and the grammar at verbs. Feelings dull.

“24. Nothing of importance transpired. Recited my regular lessons. Considerably incited to study by Marsh, formerly a classmate, who, having studied during vacation, went before the class. I wish to overtake him.



“25. Still more studious than formerly, by the reasons mentioned yesterday. In the afternoon was put forward with Marsh. Not pleased.

. . . . .

“27. Attended meeting and heard Dr. Nichols, of Portland, to my entire satisfaction. In the forenoon, he observed, that though the precepts of Christ did not in a specific manner lay any injunction or restraint upon every great crime, yet they were so formed as to render it impossible for a man to commit any one not expressly mentioned by our Saviour without breaking some important command. Though there is no law against tyranny, ingratitude, and many other things justly considered crimes, yet no one could be guilty of these acts and yet do as he would be done by. In the afternoon he spoke upon repentance. He said that it was improper to defer this to a dying hour; for what proof, says he, can there be of the sincerity, stability, and permanency of that man's faith who proves it not by practices. He said, also, that it was extremely improper to defer this act to old age, and to resign our indulgences when we have lost the relish for them; and, finally, that it was better to do nothing worthy of repentance, than to be put to the trouble of repenting,—that it was better to pursue a course straight forward than the opposite way, and be obliged to retrace our steps. His prayer, for the students in particular, was superior to anything I ever heard. Upon the whole, I spent a very agreeable day.

“28. Attended school as usual. Recited regu-



lar lessons. Saw Mr. J. S. Gilman, who, with regard to my despondency, said that I must not be discouraged, but with renewed diligence pursue my studies, and assistance would offer itself. For the future this sufficed; but for the present, debts which are already due, poor satisfaction. If a poor person is in any case to be pitied, it is in endeavoring to obtain an education. Always from necessity spending, never earning; coffers empty, with no means of filling them. Surely an education must be of great import to enable one to surmount all these obstacles, encounter all these difficulties, and put down all opposition. Spent the day in thoughtfulness."

. . . . .

"Sunday, [June] 4. . . . In the evening I attended the wedding of Sarah F. Holt, daughter of the man with whom I board, and Capt. S. Endicott. Being of a disposition prone to laughter, for my own part I was scarcely capable of restraining that unruly and improper emotion.

"From Captain Endicott, who is quite an intelligent man, and who has made nine voyages to Calcutta, besides having been to Lapland, Archangel, Copenhagen, Hamburg, London, Dover, and all the seaport towns from Dover to Havre-de-Grace, I learned that Lapland was a cold, barren, sterile place, the inhabitants doing little else than fishing. The sun did not rise for about two months whilst he was there. For about four hours in the middle of the day, the light was such that they could see to read without candles. Copenhagen

was a very neat, well-built, and pleasant place. The weather in the winter is cold. Archangel is very cold. Of the Hindoos I shall write to-morrow. A little snow fell to-day.

"5. Business as usual. For want of time I omit my history of the Hindoos. It accords with well-known accounts, as well as that given of Lapland.

. . . . .

"9. Lessons as heretofore. In the evening made an estimate of board in fitting for college, including last term. The result was found to be \$47.97.

"10. Weather warm. In the afternoon went to Judge Smith's; he was unwell, and unable to go out much. I did not see him, but saw William, who said that the part of my expenses for the last term should be paid; as to the future, he was unable to determine. My prospects now are dull indeed, my spirits a little 'below par.' I made a mistake yesterday; the result was \$53.47. For the past week, I cannot say that I have improved my time so well as I ought. He who is dependent upon others should do something to deserve their patronage. He should have double diligence, for he has double incentives to diligence."

Judge Smith, whose name has already been mentioned, was the double cousin of Deacon Robert Morison, the grandfather of J. H. Morison. He was considered the representative man of his race and town. In 1797 he had removed to Exeter. After being a member of Congress, Governor of

the State, and twice Chief Justice, he had withdrawn from practice in 1820, and was living in Exeter, the leading man of the town. He was president of the Board of Trustees of Phillips Exeter Academy, and also its treasurer. He told young Morison that their relationship was near enough to be recognized if he did well, and remote enough to be neglected if he did poorly.

“July 4. Independence. Heard an oration delivered by William Ladd, Esq., of Minot. . . . In the evening witnessed the romantic exploits of sky-rockets, fire-balls, etc.”

The Exeter Fourth of July fire-balls long remained in his memory as the most attractive of fireworks.

“July 8, Saturday. I spent the principal part of the afternoon in meditation. I see no way of getting through college, and have resolved to abandon my project at the end of this term, unless something favorable to me takes place. Certainly nothing can be more painful to me than this resolution. I hope, though few glimmerings of hope appear, that I shall not have to go.

“25. My birthday. I am eighteen years old. A plague confound the training establishment [militia] which I am about to enter. I intended to have written a few lines of poetry to put in here on this day, but want of time prevented it.

"August 2. In the forenoon received a part of a dialogue for exhibition. The part consists of three lines. In the afternoon no school. I studied at the Academy, the principal part of it on Milo. My affairs still very dubious and discouraging.

. . . . .

"August 5. In the afternoon had a digging serape in cleaning the Academy yard, which afforded very good exercise.

. . . . .

"August 9. Spent the afternoon in being busy about nothing. Forenoon as hitherto. My time passes slowly, and as dull as slowly. I mean my considerate moments, which may not, however, be very numerous.

"10. Have been rather idle to-day, that is, I 'got' my usual recitations, and not much more. I fear that I shall get, or rather that I have got, into a lazy habit. I have determined now (but I know not how I shall fulfill my determination) to study 'hard' during vacation, which is now drawing near. I may now venture my surmises upon the exhibition. I think it will be a very good one. Good-by for to-night.

. . . . .

"12. In the afternoon attended the meeting of the Golden Branch, the last for the term. Attended also to a private discussion with James Sullivan on the question, Whether is a country or city life the more favorable to virtue?

. . . . .

"15. Rehearsed my *part* in a dialogue for exhibition. I have hard work to find anything to write here nowadays.

"16. In the afternoon I attended Hampton exhibition, a distance of about seven miles from Exeter. I went on foot. The exhibition was destitute of two great qualifications, — original parts and comedies, the one of which interests, the other amuses the audience. The speaking was generally very good, — some exceptions. Very tired, — eyes ache.

. . . . .  
 "22. In the forenoon had our sham exhibition. In the afternoon attended the funeral of Mr. Stevens; from thence went to the court, where I heard Mr. Sullivan plead. . . .

"23. Examination day. I came off tolerably well; found no difficulty in rendering what I had given me, but was a little lost in conjugating a Greek verb.

"24. Exhibition. Excepting the valedictory, all was very good. In the evening took leave, perhaps for the last time, of many friends, among others of Emery, my room-mate. He could scarce contain himself.

"25. Find that I am, upon the whole, \$21.76 in debt. During the day, did little. Went to Judge Smith's.

. . . . .  
 "28. Saw to clearing out the hall of the Academy. Yesterday went to meeting; afternoon I heard Mr. Webster, of Hampton.

“ 29. Studied in geography in the forenoon. Had an invitation to spend the vacation at Dr. Abbot's, which I accepted.

“ 30. Read the ‘ Gentle Shepherd ’ of Allan Ramsay, and was very much pleased with it. By the kindness of Dr. Abbot, I have the use of his library during my residence at his house.

“ 31. Nothing particular.”

At this time the Harvard Commencement was, as its name implies, at the beginning of the collegiate year, on the last Wednesday in August. The admission examinations were held in Commencement week. Preparatory schools, like Exeter Academy, kept in session till this time, their summer vacation beginning when the college vacation ended; the boys who entered college had no vacation that summer. The September vacation of 1826 was spent for the most part in Exeter. It was short, compared with vacations of the present day; the exhibition was on the 24th of August, and on the 15th of September the new term began.

“ September 14. Rainy in the afternoon and evening. I am to have the bell of the Academy to ring, the term commencing to-morrow, for which I receive six dollars. I am also to receive from the establishment next term \$1.50 per week.

“ 15. Began to ring the bell; find it rather difficult now at first. Began in my studies at Sallust,



and Natural History in the Greek Reader. Have studied very little for vacation.

“ 24. Heard Mr. Cleveland preach. Nothing worthy of note occurred last week. Mr. J. S. Gilman is very sick of a fever, by some considered dangerous.

“ 25. Mr. Gilman is worse ; has had no sense at all. He continued as usual in his store until Saturday evening, though on Friday and Saturday many supposed that he knew not what he was about.

“ 26. Mr. G., at about twelve or a quarter past twelve, departed this life. He has been my principal patron and friend here. Though I have received no pecuniary aid immediately from him, his interest for me has been the main source of my attending this Academy, and I should do injustice to myself did I not pay this last tribute of respect to him. I came here as a stranger, but found him a friend in whom I could trust. That he has used me well is not sufficient ; he has used me very well, and I shall never forget the obligation which I was under to him.

“ 27. In the afternoon attended the funeral of Mr. G. at Mr. Hurd’s meeting-house. Mr. Cleveland delivered a short address and made the prayer.”

From October, 1826, to August, 1827, the journal contains but three entries. On August 27, 1827, appears the following :—



"Was examined and admitted at Cambridge College, but concluded to return to Exeter for another year. Spent from the Saturday preceding examination until the Thursday after it at Charlestown with my friend W. Austin."

"Sunday, October 21. Last Wednesday was Cattle-show Day. The address was delivered by Wm. Smith, Esq., of this town. He began by showing the intimate connection between all classes of people and farmers; then gave an account of the progress of agriculture in this country, and concluded with a beautiful antithesis between this and other countries. As an eloquent speech it excels anything which I have before heard."

During this winter he kept the school in the south part of his native town now called the Wilson School.

"November 27. Set out for P., where I expect to commence a school next Monday for 10 weeks at \$20 per month and board myself; expect to board at home.

"28. Arrived at P. Attended an exhibition of the dramatic club. Was much pleased with the performances.

"29. Thanksgiving. Attended meeting. Heard Mr. Abbot preach very well.

"February 6, 1828. Finished my school, for which I received \$47.50. Boarded four first weeks at J. Walker's, Esq., the last  $4\frac{1}{2}$  at Dea. Smith's.

. . . . .

“15. Arrived at Exeter. I find that I am on just about equal footing with my class.”

On March 23 his entry is an essay suggested by reading Paley's *Evidences of Christianity*. This year we find him again preparing for the exhibition, but with a more prominent part than the three lines in the dialogue.

“August 20. Wednesday forenoon, rehearsal for exhibition; afternoon, examination.

“21. Forenoon, very busy in preparing the hall; afternoon, exhibition. My part valedictory [two lines are here torn from the journal with evident intention; they are followed by the words] my performance, but think they were undeserved. In the evening attended a meeting of the Alumni of the Academy; was highly pleased.”

Mr. Morison did not join his class at Cambridge at the end of the Freshman year, but remained another year at Exeter, pursuing the Sophomore studies by himself, and also acting as a teacher in the Academy. This year he lived with his kinsman, Judge Smith, as a member of his family, the young man having established the right by which the relationship was near enough to be claimed. Mrs. Smith had died a year before, and during this year his daughter died, while his son had contracted the same disease (consumption), and died in the following spring, the judge being thus left deso-

late in his old age. Such events had their effect on the young man. Many years afterwards he wrote : —

“ Their illness and departure, especially the rapid and fatal decline of his daughter, a most lovely and interesting woman, took me through a wholly new experience. This life could never again be to me what it had been before. The light of worlds beyond had been let in upon it.”<sup>1</sup>

The diary for this year, the year that he lived with Judge Smith, is very fragmentary, but contains a few entries covering the close of his Exeter life : —

“ August 20, 1829. Exhibition at P. E. Academy. I, in the forenoon, delivered an address before the Golden Branch, which was heard by a respectable audience. These ephemeral things make a great noise for an hour or two, but seldom longer. I do not think that the highest encomiums upon *this* would render me at all vain. It is always pleasant to succeed in what we undertake, but to succeed in small things like this cannot be considered either a great or a lasting honor. Orators are always overloaded with unmeaning compliments. It matters but little how vapid are their thoughts. Though censure would be disagreeable, praise can hardly be considered worth anything.”

He left Exeter on the 27th of August, 1829, for Cambridge, where he underwent his last exami-

<sup>1</sup> *History of Peterborough*, p. 188\*.

nation on the 28th, and at the beginning of the Junior year became actively a member of the class of 1831, with which he had passed the admission examination in 1827.

Fifty years later he wrote of his two principal teachers at Exeter Academy:—

“Dr. Abbot was then, and continued for thirteen years afterwards to be, at the head of the institution. He had been associated with very able and accomplished assistant instructors,—men who as teachers and in other walks held the highest posts of usefulness and honor. But, while with him, they spontaneously looked up to him as their superior, not only in official dignity, but in the easy and natural ascendancy which he maintained in the government of the school. Outside of that, as a neighbor, a citizen, or a friend, he was apparently the meekest of men, diffident, hesitating, distrustful of himself. But no admiral on the quarter-deck of his flagship was, more than he in his school, the impersonation of decision, firmness, and authority.

“The personal influence of a great teacher is greater than anything that he says or does. It gives that a meaning which it cannot have in itself. When Dr. Abbot entered the Academy yard, or lifted his hat, as he did to every student he met, it was as if the benignant spirit of a Christian gentleman diffused itself visibly around him, and gently touched the boy’s mind with a new sense of personal dignity and kindness.

“Mr. Soule as an assistant teacher filled his post

modestly and grandly. . . . When I was admitted to the Academy in 1825, Mr. Soule was twenty-nine years old. In his gait and personal appearance, in his bearing towards the students and his mode of teaching, as well as in the tones of his voice, he was then very much the same that he always was afterwards. There was nothing like self-assertion in his demeanor. He moved and spoke calmly and deliberately. I do not remember that I ever saw him out of temper. But there was something about him which gave the impression that, while he was both quick and exact in his mental operations, he was also equally quick in his feelings, and that he was a man with whom it would not be safe to take any undue liberties. I never saw a flash, but we all felt that the lightning was there, ready to cheek at the instant any approach to disobedience or disrespect."

The feelings with which Mr. Morison regarded his early life are perhaps shown best in his own words written in his Class Book at the time of his graduation in 1831: —

"My life has been marked by few uncommon incidents, and a short notice is all that it deserves. I was born in Peterboro', N. H., July 25, A. D. 1808. Like most of my classmates, I went to school in my childhood, and like some of my classmates got my full share of ferulings and floggings. Until large enough 'to ride the horse to plough' (so we country-folks talk) I was allowed to go to school nearly six months in a year, but after that my school time was restricted to 10 or 12 weeks a year. I lived



at home, in the delightful occupation of *farming* (which the poets bless more than I did), till I was 12 years old, when, in consequence of the death of my father, I was 'put out to work,' and so continued for five years. This was a most unhappy period of my life; never could a poor creature feel more desolate. I still look back upon it with feelings very similar to those which Satan must have experienced when he looked back from the garden of Eden to the chaotic regions through which he had so recently passed. But my time was not unprofitably spent, for besides earning enough to feed and clothe me, and at the same time going through a severe moral discipline, I also derived no small enjoyment from books. The shreds and patches of time which I had at my command, and they were few and small, were almost entirely devoted to reading, and I can truly say that at no subsequent time have I been able to read with so high a relish. The scraps which I then read (for even very long works were devoured by piecemeal) were, like the choice bits of a beggar's fare, good in themselves and doubly good on account of their scantiness. But, after all this was rather irritating than otherwise, like a deficiency of bed-clothes in a cold night, keeping one in constant motion. Still the exercise was sufficient to prevent drowsiness, and to keep up a spirit of activity which might have been destroyed, and succeeded by a general languor, if bodily functions had been in a measure suffocated by too great an abundance of clothing. We know that those who in early life have been obliged to dig (with a shovel, I mean) for a livelihood are

afterwards much more likely to be debilitated by sedentary pursuits than those who have been brought up without bodily labor. May it not be that those who in early years have but little time to read, and few books, are more likely than others to be sated and confused when they may spend their whole time in this way with an army of books at their disposal? Be this as it may, I am certainly ashamed to compare my present ardor for literary pursuits, and my present proficiency in them, with what I felt when destitute of all means of following them.

“In 1824 I was led to Exeter, N. H., by some strange fatality for which I never could account; for to a person of my views and habits no honest situation on earth could be more humiliating or more unpleasant. Still I had evenings to myself and *candles*. I had no opportunity of associating on equal terms with reasonable beings, and therefore kept entirely by myself, improving my leisure time to the best of my ability and knowledge. But night is darkest towards the dawn. After having been in this unsocial and desponding state for nearly a year, by the kindness of friends I was admitted into the Academy as a *charity* student. Here I remained three years as a student and one in the mixed character of student and instructor. I passed the time pleasantly and I hope with profit. Many of my most valuable and most valued friendships were here formed, and I look back to my instructors and benefactors with no small degree of affection and gratitude.”



With his removal from Exeter the first period of Mr. Morison's life may be considered closed. He had attained his majority, and had joined his class in Harvard College at the beginning of the Junior year. He had passed through a period of hardship and struggle, and had reached his place among educated associates. Those who knew him only as a mature man will be surprised to learn that in his native town, and even after going to Exeter, he was regarded as one of the greatest fighters among the boys with whom he associated; at Exeter he fought his boy for the last time, and determined then that he would never do it again.

All four of his brothers followed him to Exeter Academy. The five were a stalwart set of country boys; Judge Smith called them the thirty feet of Morison. Three more brothers entered and were graduated at Harvard College.<sup>1</sup> The list of Harvard graduates to-day shows eleven Morisons, four of the first and seven of the second generation, while two of the third generation are already on the college rolls. They are all of this one family, and but for him it is not probable that the name would have had any representation. The education of the younger sister was also due to him.

<sup>1</sup> Horace Morison, 1837; Nathaniel Holmes Morison, 1839; James Morison, 1844.

### III

#### EARLY MANHOOD

MR. MORISON spent but little more than a year in Harvard College. He joined his class at the beginning of the Junior year, and besides the absences of the regular vacations he kept school both winters, — in the Junior year at Lexington, Mass., and in the Senior year at Northborough, Mass. Among his classmates were John Lothrop Motley and Wendell Phillips; his chum was Edgar Buckingham, who also became a Unitarian minister; his special friend was George Cheyne Shattuck, with whom a most affectionate intimacy continued, in spite of different occupations and very different religious views, for more than sixty years. An unfortunate quarrel occurred in the class during the Senior year, which led to estrangements that prevented the holding of a class meeting till many years after graduation. It is said that at the meeting, when the class officers were chosen, Morison was the chairman on the ground that he was the only member who was on speaking terms with all his classmates. He was graduated the

third scholar in his class. Forty-five years later he wrote of his college life : —

“ In August, 1829, I was admitted to the Junior Class in Harvard College. Of the hundred dollars which I had saved from my earnings during the previous year, I was required to pay ninety for instruction which I had not been able to receive during the Freshman and Sophomore years of my class.<sup>1</sup> But, notwithstanding this exaction, which always seemed to me unjust, I have every reason to speak of my Alma Mater with grateful affection and respect. The last generation of American statesmen numbered among its distinguished men no grander example of a faithful, disinterested, able public man than Josiah Quincy, then President of Harvard University. He was kind to me from the beginning, and his kindness continued down to the last year of his useful and honored life. I taught school during six of the twenty-four months of my college course, so that I was really in college a little less than a year and a half. I earned what little I could, and practiced a pretty severe economy. My expenses were small, and Judge Smith had generously and very judiciously so arranged matters that I never felt any great anxiety in regard to my immediate wants. I began life with nothing. I never have asked pecuniary assistance for myself, and yet I have never been unable to meet my engagements. Sometimes I

<sup>1</sup> Payment for advanced standing, a species of protective tariff abolished in 1870.

could not see a month beforehand how the means could be procured, but they always came, and sometimes from the most unexpected sources.

“On graduating in 1831, I concluded to study law, having engaged to pursue my studies with a very learned lawyer of Baltimore, and to meet my expenses by instructing his two children. On account of this engagement I declined several advantageous offers of employment as a teacher. After waiting several weeks, when the time for such offers had passed by, the gentleman sent me word that he had engaged another young man and would not need my services. This was a very great disappointment to me. It left me without occupation and without means of support, but it taught me a lesson as to the sacredness of engagements that has always been of great service to me.”<sup>1</sup>

So far as he had any plans, his idea both at Exeter and at college had been to study law. In Exeter he used to attend court with the feeling that he might some time be himself at the bar.

During his Senior year, in May, 1831, he took a journey, largely on foot, through the Connecticut valley, going from Cambridge to Northampton and thence following up the valley to Hanover, N. H., returning from Hanover to Peterborough. He kept a separate journal of this trip, which is interesting principally from the account it gives of the two colleges which he visited, Amherst and Dart-

<sup>1</sup> *History of Peterborough*, p. 188\*.

mouth. It was not long after the division of New England Congregationalism into the Unitarian and Trinitarian sections, and at Amherst he found a revival in progress, and both professors and students specially bitter towards Harvard College. At Hanover he seems to have been very kindly received by some of his old Exeter schoolmates, but he finally concluded : —

“ The more I see and hear of other colleges, the more I am disposed to be satisfied with my own ; for with all her faults she has more virtues and fewer failings than any other institution of the kind which I know anything about. At any rate, she is free from religious and political intolerance, and this is no small thing.”

In the summer vacation he made another trip, on which he kept a diary. Leaving Boston on the 22d of July, he went by stage to Portland, where he spent three days at the house of Rev. Dr. Nichols, and then went on to Warren, where he visited Jerusha F. Morison, the daughter of his grandfather's younger brother, Thomas. She took him in a chaise to Belfast, and his brief description of their parting is quite pathetic : —

“ There I parted with my favorite cousin, whom I never expect to see again ; for she is far, very far gone in a consumption, the curse of our family, and the general scourge of the young, the fair, the learned, and the good.”



He probably had in mind the family of his relative, Judge Smith. On the way back he visited Bowdoin College.

After graduating, Mr. Morison kept for several years what may perhaps be called a journal, but was more in the nature of a commonplace book. It contained essays on various subjects, some original and some copied, and much matter which, though indicating the condition of his mind at that time, was not such as he would have wished to see perpetuated. A few extracts show the progress of his life : —

“November 3, 1831. A fortnight ago last Monday (October 17) I commenced a private *school* in this place. I have but nine scholars [boys], and my salary probably will not exceed \$400. I board at Dr. Ware’s, and have a room at Rev. H. Ware, Jr.’s. I yesterday removed to my lodgings, and take advantage of the present epoch in my life to commence a journal of myself and my thoughts.

“I never in my life passed a fortnight of greater perplexity than the last fortnight, having been wholly undecided as to my future profession. I know not that I have a natural aptitude for any particular profession, and from the first I have avoided following out any course of study which should fit me for one rather than another of the learned professions. The consequence is that I am now prepared for no course of action. I am free to choose the path, but have the whole way



to clear out before me. And with all this I am perfectly satisfied, notwithstanding the extreme perplexity into which it has thrown me. I have pursued the great road which leads through the metropolis of learning, satisfied with the riches offered in its storehouses, without prying into the narrow lanes, secret avenues, and unfrequented marts which are interspersed through the vast city. I durst not trust my inexperienced feet in these places, lest, being dazzled by novelty, perplexed by variety, sated by abundance, and seduced by trifles, my senses corrupted, my mind bewildered, and my strength exhausted, I should no longer be able to see the right way, to choose it when seen, or follow it when chosen.

“Thus far I have followed the main path, but have now come to a place where ‘three ways meet.’ One of these I must choose, and I am pausing a while to consider. This is the source of my perplexity.

“Medicine is out of the question. My prepossessions are almost entirely in favor of divinity, but my conscience will not allow me rashly to enter upon it. I am a *moral* but not a *religious* person. I have thought much of religion and its all-engrossing topics; many of the most happy moments of my life have been employed in the contemplation of its truths. Still I am not *habitually* a religious person. My wayward, wandering thoughts do not always revert to religion as to the great object of their attention; and when engaged in the affairs of this world — its pleasures, studies,

and pursuits — my mind does not fondly recur to *God*, his perfections, attributes, and works, as the mind of the exile recurs to his ‘fatherland,’ the scenes of his early years, the friends of his happiest days.

“Still I must do something. And may not much, nay everything, be done by a prayerful, serious, contemplative life? I will try the experiment. This year shall be passed in religious studies, and if by the smiles of Providence I shall succeed in establishing a religious character — religious habits of thought, feeling, and action — I shall study divinity. Otherwise *law*, with its dry details and intricate folds, will be my profession.

“In the mean time I am to attend as many exercises of the Divinity School as *my own* school will allow, and at the end of the year be one year advanced in the studies thereof.

. . . . .  
“November 9, 1831. For the three months last past I have had, I think, my full share of little perplexities. August 29th I engaged to go to Baltimore as a private tutor. . . . After waiting at Peterborough three weeks for further information, I learnt that another arrangement had been made, . . . and that my services were not wanted. Whereupon I forthwith proceeded to Cambridge in quest of a school. Friends, whom I supposed well acquainted with the thing, strongly advised me to apply for the situation of principal in the Boston Latin School. I therefore mustered what recommendations I could and besieged the place, but

was repulsed *cum magno dedecore*. What was now to be done? It was too late in the season to expect a profitable school, and I must be about something or starve. A small school in Cambridge, with an income large enough to support me, was at my service, and I heedlessly engaged it, and in it am now employed.

. . . . .  
“February 12, 1832. About three weeks ago President Quincy read to me a portion of a letter from Rev. Mr. Dewey, of New Bedford, stating explicitly and without any reservation that he (Mr. D.) wished to procure an instructor for a small female school, with a salary of \$1,000, and requesting Mr. Quincy to recommend to him some gentleman for the situation. Accordingly Mr. Quincy recommended me, and his letter was seconded by another from Rev. H. Ware, Jr. I, of course, felt pretty sure of the place; but after waiting till I was tired, without getting any information, I was this evening informed that the good people of New Bedford hardly knew what they wanted, and that they would probably conclude to have a preceptress.”

The good people of New Bedford were not so uncertain as this entry would imply. There was a little delay, but two months later Mr. Morison went to New Bedford and began this school. While the school lasted only about a year, it opened his life to new and gratifying relations, and was

the beginning of one of the happiest portions of his life.

“February 13. I have been this evening examined for admission into the Theological School. For some time past I have regularly attended the exercises, and after much perplexity, much deep feeling and anxious prayer, I have at length concluded to make divinity my profession. I feel the responsibleness of the step, and with *hope* and *trembling* am ready to meet it, praying that a kind Father will pardon my errors, supply my deficiencies, and nourish within me that purity of heart and simplicity of purpose for which all in this calling should be distinguished.

. . . . .

“June 30. It is more than three months since I wrote a word in this book. For the last two months and more (since April 13) I have been in New Bedford teaching a little female school. During this time I have been little disposed either to read, write, or to think. I am, upon the whole, pleased with my school. Some days it drags heavily along, but some days I really enjoy myself. It is delightful to instruct pupils who have minds and dispositions for improvement, and such I trust is the case with at least *some* of my pupils.

. . . . .

“July 1. The commencement of a new week and a new month. I have this morning heard a most admirable sermon from Mr. Dewey on the necessity of religion to supply the wants and satisfy the cravings of our nature.

“It is *communion* day. In this ordinance I have never joined. But is it not time? Is it not my duty to attach myself to some church? I feel — that is, I felt — a guilty consciousness weighing upon me to-day as I was leaving the Lord’s Supper to be celebrated by others.

“I often detect in myself a disposition to pursue a blind and headlong course. I feel convinced of the importance of a duty and of its imperative character. I cannot justify to myself the neglect of it. And yet from month to month I blindly go on, thinking of it with pain, but without determining no longer to disregard it. It is the power of wrong feelings over right principles.”

This last entry was made five months after he had decided on his profession and entered the Divinity School. In the following month he joined the Peterborough church. The records of the Congregational Church in Peterborough show that John H. Morison and his sister Eliza became communicants on the 26th of August, 1832.

In the brief autobiography before quoted, he says : —

“In March, 1832, I began to teach a small private school for young ladies in New Bedford, and remained there a year. That year was perhaps the most important in my life. I was then for the first time a man among men. I had leisure for study, and devoted myself to it with the utmost intensity and enthusiasm. I read Cicero’s philo-



sophical writings, Cousin, Pascal, Madame de Staël, Dante, some of the old English prose-writers, Wordsworth, and, above all in its influence on my mind, Coleridge, especially his 'Friend' and 'Biographia Literaria.' In the winter I gave a course of seven lectures on literary subjects to a very intelligent audience of perhaps a hundred persons. This was a new and exciting experience. It made me feel the responsibility of acting on the minds of others. . . . Among the great advantages which I enjoyed at New Bedford, especially in the society of very intelligent people, that which I valued above all the rest was the privilege of hearing Dr. Dewey preach. It was the most quickening and uplifting preaching that I have ever heard, and of itself made an epoch in my life."<sup>1</sup>

Quoting again from the journal:—

"November 11. I have just come from hearing an excellent discourse from Mr. Dewey on the reply of Nathan to David, 'Thou art the man.' The sermon was exceedingly strong, beautiful, and striking. The leading object was to show the insufficiency of religious . . . sentiments, which are like the northern lights that wane and flash in beauty and rise up in brilliant coruscations, give little light and no heat. The imagination is engaged, bright visions flit around it, but the heart is cold as the north pole. Religious . . . sentiments have their end. They are like holy oil poured upon the ocean. They smooth the surface and calm its apparent agitations, but the depths

<sup>1</sup> *History of Peterborough*, p. 189\*.



are unaffected. They may be restless and turbid. Again, they are like the morning cloud gilded by the rising sunbeams and picturing forth fair and lovely visions. But we walk not upon these clouds. They do not influence our lives. The earth, its rugged paths and trying scenes, — these are the ways and the objects of our thoughts and actions, and if religion exists at all it must exist here and follow us through all our employments. There are many who cry, ‘How beauteous are the feet of those who bring glad tidings!’ as they stand at a distance upon the mountains. Their countenances and their garbs beam with loveliness. But when they come near and proclaim the nature of their message, they are stern, unbending, rigid in their demands and rigid in their appearance.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Dewey was one of those great preachers who write few sermons, but those which he wrote were revised and preached over and over again. In the early spring of 1846 he was in Washington, and one Sunday while there he preached in the Hall of Representatives. This sermon, on the Difference between Religious Principles and Sentiments, was the one which he selected for that occasion. A Washington gentleman often spoke of it as the most eloquent and effective sermon he ever heard. The preacher read with wonderful power the story of David and Nathan, and followed it with this discourse. The bequest of Joseph Smithson for “founding at Washington an institution for the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men” had been the subject of debate in Congress session after session for nearly ten years, and various bills had been reported, but no one had been favorably received by Congress.

The day following Dr. Dewey’s service, Robert Dale Owen, Chairman of the Select Committee, in reporting a new bill, made an impressive speech in which he condemned the dilatoriness of Congress in wasting ten years in fruitless discussion, and referred in the following words to this sermon: “I impute not to an Amer-

“I cannot hear such a man as Dr. Dewey without a mixture of pain in my feelings. His trembling, agitated countenance shows that he is wearing himself out in his calling,—that he will be just as much a martyr to the cause of Christianity as the holy men of old who ended their lives upon the cross or at the stake.”

Meanwhile the vigorous constitution of the country boy had begun to feel the effects of privations and overwork. In November, 1831, his diary refers to a bad state of the blood, and a cough which had tormented him more or less for nine months. In March, 1833, he gave up his school at New Bedford, went to his mother's house in Peterborough, and remained there till late in the summer in a state of physical exhaustion which he did not understand. With the beginning of the new col-

ican Congress, I attribute not to any of my fellow-members, the deliberate intention to neglect the objects of this trust. There is, doubtless there always has been, a right feeling on this subject. The just cause of complaint is, that this right feeling, like many other good intentions in this world, has never ripened into action. When you feel nobly and intend well, go and do something! Do some good; it avails nothing merely to think about it. Such were the words pronounced from yonder desk by a teacher whose impressive eloquence recently filled this hall. I thought of the Smithsonian bequest when I heard them.” With a few more eloquent words, Mr. Owen closed what has been called one of the ablest speeches made during the years of the discussion of this bequest. With very little more debate the bill was passed. The gentleman who related the incident said that Dr. Dewey's sermon was one of the most potent factors in accomplishing this result.

legiate year he returned to Cambridge and rejoined his class in the Divinity School. Of this period he writes : —

“ At the beginning of the academical year 1833 I joined the middle class at the Cambridge Divinity School, which was then under the able and conscientious charge of John Gorham Palfrey and the Henry Wares, father and son. There was an extraordinary degree of vitality and enthusiasm in the school at that time, especially in regard to philanthropical movements. I entered very heartily into these subjects, and took an earnest part in the preparation of elaborate papers, and in the debates. Both my moral convictions and my philosophy went much deeper, and looked to a much more thorough and radical reform than was usually contemplated in the social movements of the day. I was, perhaps, considered too conservative, because I was in fact too radical to be satisfied with the superficial measures that were suggested by the most zealous reformers. The labor question, which is just beginning to cast its portentous shadows before it now, was one on which I prepared a report that cost a vast amount of labor, and which came to conclusions that are now beginning to engage the attention of thoughtful men. During a temporary vacancy in the department, I taught political economy to the Senior Class of undergraduates, and read nearly everything that had then been published on that great but still incomplete science. I prepared two lectures for the

Exeter Lyceum, and did not slight my studies in the Divinity School. In this way I overtasked my physical powers. In May, 1834, I had a slight attack of typhoid fever, with a determination of blood to the head. After two or three weeks I went to my mother's in Peterborough. But the disease did not leave me. I spent nearly a year in a dark room, unable to sit up, or to bear the presence even of a near friend. A strong constitution was seriously broken. For thirty years afterwards I was not able to do more than one third the amount of mental labor which had once been a healthful and happy exercise. This was a constantly recurring grief and disappointment.”<sup>1</sup>

During the year in the Divinity School the journal contains only thoughts and essays, there being no narratives of his life. There is no entry of any kind from July 27, 1834, to May 10, 1836, when he writes as follows:—

“May 10, 1836. For the last two years I have been not even a spectator in the world. One year of entire seclusion from men and books and one year of a sickly and imperfect intercourse have nearly passed by. Yet, in all, my heavenly Father has not forsaken me. He has kindly supplied my wants. He has provided the best of friends, nor have I been wanting in anything which the world can give. And for the blessings which the world cannot give or take away I trust that I am not ungrateful. They have borne me up under the sever-

<sup>1</sup> *History of Peterborough*, 190\*.

est trials of sickness, and have rendered the near prospect of death not only cheering but inviting. Oh, who that has once felt their soothing, consoling, animating power could give up the hopes and comforts of religion for all that avarice would seek or ambition grasp?

“I remember an evening in November, 1834. For a month I had been shut up in darkness, and had seen no object of nature. My brain and nervous system were in the most excitable state, and I was unable to bear the presence even of a sister in my room. But in the twilight of a beautiful evening in our Indian Summer I was allowed to sit up a few minutes, and the curtains were removed from a pane of glass so that I could see a small spot of ground and a portion of the sky: that spot was the place of my birth, connected in my mind and endeared to my heart by the dreams, sports, and companions of my childhood; and how easy the transition from the earth, which in the dim twilight gradually melted into the blue sky, — how easy the transition from the earth where life began to the heaven where I hoped soon to renew the life which then seemed faintly glimmering in the socket! The frosts of November had destroyed the verdure of the fields, and its cold blasts had swept away the foliage of the maples, whose long, bare arms were stretched out as if to struggle with the storms of winter. The earth bore marks of death, and the evening, too, like the grave, was closing in, as if to hide from our view the widespread tokens of desolation. But mild lights from above, like hopes



from heaven amid the dark trials of life, softened the asperity of the scene ; and the earth and trees, naked, bleak, and barren as they were, spoke of the resurrection which was to ensue. This sketch, with its reflections, may seem fanciful. But to me they were all reality, and I would not exchange those moments, with the hours of happy meditation to which they have given birth, for the proudest hour of a conqueror's career."

During this long illness he was kept at his mother's house, cared for by his mother and sisters, but with medical attendance which failed to appreciate the case. At length he was visited by "that great physician and excellent man, Dr. Amos Twitchell," of Keene, and from that time he began to improve ; throughout his life he regarded this man as the ideal physician. This long illness practically closed the second period of his life. The country boy who had grown into a stalwart man, and, when the glories of an education had been opened to him, had tried to do double work, was for the next thirty years to be a delicate invalid, seldom able to do more than half the amount of a man's full work. From this time it was always his habit to spend two or three hours every day lying down. He preached his first sermon in February, 1836, in his native town.

Those who knew him best felt that the work



which he did was much more than it is the privilege of many men to perform ; but this work was largely done through the influences which he always exerted on others, rather than by the steady hours of toil which had been his method as a younger man.

## IV

### NEW BEDFORD

IN May, 1836, the journal was resumed, and, besides essays and thoughts, it again contains a narrative. He was now preaching, but not a candidate for settlement. He was at Exeter, in the house of his friend, Hon. Jeremiah Smith, who had gone with Mrs. Smith on a journey through Virginia to Kentucky and Ohio. The judge had married in 1831 a lady much younger than himself, who was the mother of the present Hon. Jeremiah Smith, and a woman whose whole life was devoted to the highest ideals.

“May 15, Sunday morning. May this be a day good for my soul! May not the annoying thoughts of the world find place in my heart, but may I this and every day live a godly, righteous, and sober life! How little are our Sabbaths what they should be! With many, they are hardly more than days of animal torpor; with some, days of trifling amusement. To how few are they days of rest and refreshment to the weary soul! To how few, days of solemn self-examination and prayer!

“May 16. As yesterday was to my mind a very exciting, so to-day is a very stupid day, and I am

glad to have my mind, which for some days past has been laboring under too great activity, become more sluggish and inactive. I have to-day received from Mr. Swain a letter inviting me to spend the summer at Naushon, which I have engaged to do, provided that an engagement with Dr. Channing at Newport should not interfere.

. . . . .  
“ May 22. I came four weeks ago from Boston. The preceding Sabbath I had preached at Providence, — one of the most uncomfortable days I had ever passed, — and the three Sabbaths previous at Boston, the two before at Keene, N. H. ; and these, with the exception of half a day in February at Peterborough, and the first day in May at Dover, are the only days on which I have preached. Heaven grant that if I am to continue in the ministry I may be able to perform my duties with more comfort and satisfaction! I was oppressed by every subject on which I wrote, and came into the pulpit with such a sense of weakness that I almost rejoiced when increased debility obliged me to leave the pulpit. I came here four weeks ago, with spirits more depressed than they have been for years, and with mind more troubled and perplexed. But solitude and repose have been gradually restoring my equanimity, and my health is considerably improved and improving.

“ My friends, and more than friends, Judge and Mrs. Smith, at whose house I am, are absent on a two months' excursion to the West. They went Tuesday, 10th of May, and since then I have been

entirely alone. But I love solitude. It is, in my case at least, the best restorative for a troubled spirit, and it has not often been my lot to enjoy more in the same time than during the past week. Books, though I can read but little ; writing, though here I am more limited ; meditation and prayer, — these, with the leaves which are just peeping out from their winter prisons, and the birds which seem as if bringing tidings of a happier land, the sun and skies, which, after a winter of almost unprecedented severity, are once more smiling upon us, have altogether given a delightful occupation to the mind. I ride much on horseback, and should have set out for Peterborough last Thursday, but a kick from my horse on Wednesday evening disabled me for a day or two, and I have for the present given up the journey. But here I am, happily provided with everything that can do me good. My trials and feeling enlarge the bounds of my sympathy, and will, I hope, have their use in the field to which I am called. Or if not, they may at least have a useful and permanent influence upon my own mind and heart.

“ Father of Spirits, thou best knowest what I need, and, whether it be prosperity or adversity, things joyous or grievous, give me grace so to receive thy righteous dispensations that all may work together for my spiritual and everlasting good. If it be best that I should be humbled in the dust, and constrained to drink the cup of sorrow and depression, thy will — may I say it with a sincere heart ! — thy will, O God, be done. Grant me

that godly repentance which is not to be repented of ; give me firmer principles of duty, stronger aspirations after holiness, a higher faith and a purer love. May I in all things recognize thy gracious hand, and so live that death may find me, through thy grace, a worthy object of thy pardoning mercy ! Through Jesus Christ. Amen.

. . . . .

“June 2. The twenty-four preceding pages have been written at Exeter during the last three weeks. I have been wholly alone at the house of my early and late benefactor, Judge Smith, who, with Mrs. S., is on a journey to the South and West. Heaven go with them, and restore them in safety to their home, which has been to me a home indeed. It has seldom been my lot to enjoy more in the same length of time than during the three weeks which have just closed.

“This morning I am to leave Exeter ; to spend two or three days in Boston ; then two or three at New Bedford ; and the summer at Naushon, with my excellent friend, Mr. Swain. My health has been rapidly gaining : quiet and exercise, with a pure air and simple diet, gentle exercise of the mental faculties, and a happy employment of the affections are to me the great restoratives. God grant that a life which has already been so singularly blessed by his goodness may not be spent in vain ! But he best knows what is right ; his will be done.

. . . . .

“Naushon, June 16. I left Exeter June 2 ; stayed three days in Boston at the house of the

best of physicians and friends, Dr. Shattuck, to whom I feel under greater obligations than to any other man except my long-tried benefactor, Judge Smith. Monday, June 6th, I came to New Bedford, where I remained until Friday (10th), when I came in a packet to Naushon. My health suffered considerably from the excitement of the journey, and I have now not more than half the strength I had when I left Exeter. But I am recruiting. Everything here seems favorable to my objects, and I hope by autumn to enter upon my profession with a goodly amount of strength, though in this hope I am by no means sanguine."

Dr. Shattuck was the father of his classmate who bore the same name: the words in the journal express but a small portion of the feeling with which Mr. Morison regarded him; after his death in 1854 Mr. Morison said, in a notice of him in the "Christian Register": "We have known men of greater intellectual attainments, of more nicely balanced characters, and with fewer failings, but we never have known a more generous or a better man."

Mr. Swain was a retired merchant of New Bedford, whose family, besides himself, consisted of his wife, a most refined lady of the Quaker type, and a crippled son. Some years before, Mr. Swain and Mr. John M. Forbes had purchased Naushon, the largest of the Elizabeth Islands, which from



that time forward was Mr. Swain's summer home. The island had originally been owned by Governor Bowdoin, and the purchase carried the title to Mr. Swain, who from that time was called Governor by his friends. While the habits of Naushon life were always simple, the guests entertained there included some of the country's most famous men. The relations which Mr. Morison bore to Dr. Shattuck and to Governor Swain were shown by the fact that he named his two sons for Dr. Shattuck and for Governor Swain's son Robert.

He remained at Naushon till the middle of September, and the following extracts from the journal trace the course of his life and mind:—

“August 3, 1836. I last Sunday preached at New Bedford in the morning. It was the first time that I have ever felt happy in the pulpit.

“The doctrine of a Divine Providence as taught by Jesus is to be found in no system of philosophy or established religion. Submission to the Divine Will has, indeed, been taught. The Mahometan submits, but it is as the atheist submits to a harsh and unyielding fatality. So taught the Stoics. Socrates had a glimpse of something better, but that was all. He submitted to his fate, with the hope that all would end happily; but with the feeling also that he *must* submit to what was unavoidable. Look at the consolations of Cicero, with all the stores of ancient philosophy and religion in

his reach. It is the doom of all — such is his most frequent source of comfort — it is the doom of all to fade, to suffer, to perish. Cities and nations even decay ; why, then, should I, an individual, complain, or shrink from my fate ? They who carried these points farthest did not hold to the unnatural doctrine that there is no pain, — that sufferings are a matter of indifference. It was Jesus alone who turned our sufferings, trials, sorrows, nay, death and the grave, — into a triumph. He first taught the sanctifying power of afflictions. He first taught that they are the merciful provision of a kind Father ; that tribulations are to be counted as gain, because through them we are to enter the kingdom of heaven ; that God is ever present with us, and, though He suffers us to be afflicted, yet if we but look to Him He will turn our sorrows into rejoicing. He may not remove the galling thorn, but a voice from heaven answers, ‘ My grace is sufficient for thee ; my strength is made perfect in weakness.’

. . . . .

“ August 7, Sunday. My health not very good, but my mind is filled more and more with a desire of being able to be of some service to my fellow-men. I do not regret my illness. It has been the instrument of great good to my heart. At times, however, I almost lose all hope of ever having strength to go into the vineyard of Christ ; and when my mind is most active and my heart most full, then is the weakness of the body most apparent. But something at such times — is it con-

ceit? — something tells me that I have yet a great work to perform on earth; that in proportion to the magnitude of the work must be the difficulty of preparation; and that my present long-continued discipline is the best possible means of preparation for what is before me. So be it, Lord. I would not rush into the field, though the harvest be indeed plenteous. I feel that one or even many years more may be most profitably spent in my present retirement from the active pursuits of life. I have much — oh, how much have I! — yet to learn. O God, sanctify to me the discipline of thy providence. I would yield in all things to thee. Make me but a child of thine. Give me the spirit of my Master, — a spirit which will fit me alike to live or die, to labor with zeal and love and prudence, to leave all with hope and joy and faith. Thy will, — may it be mine, — thy will be done.

. . . . .

“September 2. Received a letter from Dr. Channing, saying that his son had returned from Europe, and that he would be glad to have me with him at Newport as soon as might be consistent with my engagements. I shall, I think, go in a fortnight.

. . . . .

“September 13. I to-day left Naushon, where I have spent a most delightful summer. I cannot feel under too great obligations to my friends, Mr. and Mrs. Swain for all their kindness during the season. Not one unpleasant incident has occurred. . . .

“September 14. Came from New Bedford to Newport, where I found Dr. Channing quite sick,

— for four days unable to sit up. He speaks with difficulty. His mind is clear and strong, cheerful and happy. He says it tries him to find that his voice does not correspond to his feelings, — that when his feelings are even sportive his voice seems plaintive, as though he sunk under sickness and improperly gave way to it.

“September 15. Dr. Channing had last night little rest, and that little confused. He remarked this morning that he had seemed lost in the abyss of the infinite, and that on awaking it was difficult to recover the feeling of personal identity. ‘How little,’ he added, ‘do we know of the field of suffering, and how slow to learn even from experience!’ After this he spoke clearly, though with some difficulty, of the studies of his son. I have never seen a human soul wrapt up in so slender a fold of mortality, — and such a soul! shining out with clearness and force, as it were, from the very leanness and frailty of death. The little portion of flush which he usually has is wholly gone; his eyes are sunken, but retain all their wonted spirit; and the expression of countenance is benignant, happy, and in the highest degree spiritual.

“Upon being asked how his toast was at tea, ‘Why not good?’ he said, but continued with great pleasantry, ‘The perfect is what we are always to seek, and never expect to find.’ Speaking of . . . he said, ‘He is a man of great brilliancy, but is *never in earnest*, and therefore never can accomplish any great work.’ ‘Biography,’ he said, ‘is for the most part poor. No man should ever under-

take to write a biography unless he felt that his subject could *bear* to be presented in an unfavorable light.' He thought we greatly wanted a Life of Washington which should show *the whole man*. He thought Washington deficient in the tender feelings and sympathies of humanity, or else one who had so straightened himself by rules of dignity that his natural feelings were kept out of sight, if indeed they had any play. He regretted not having spoken upon the subject with La Fayette, who was a warm-hearted man, and who seems to have found sympathy in Washington."

Late in life Mr. Morison spoke as follows of an incident which may have occurred during this period: —

"I remember, very early in my acquaintance with Dr. Channing, going one day to the seashore; and, while the other members of the party were scattered apart, we, who were both in feeble health, went into a darkened room of the hotel. And there he reclined upon the sofa, with his face toward the little light admitted. The light fell upon his face, partially revealing the pale, ample forehead of the man, and the eyes, which seemed not fixed on the things of this world, but as if they were looking into the world of spiritual thought and life. And as he lay there, his countenance thus illuminated, he spoke of the passage that he had been reading in Philippians, and this passage expressed the man, as he was talking, more completely than anything else could do. 'For our



conversation is in heaven, whence we also look for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.' He repeated that passage in tones which those who remember him may possibly be able to imagine, and talked on that double subject, our conversation in heaven and the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing that I ever heard from him in public, though I was the only hearer in the room, ever took me more up into the very centre of God's heavenly kingdom, and seemed to shed abroad and around me the influence of that holy experience."

After his stay with Dr. Channing, Mr. Morison returned to New Bedford, where he became a member of Mr. Swain's family and the tutor of his son Robert. The winters were spent in New Bedford and the summers at Naushon. In 1838, by the advice of Mr. Morison, Robert Swain was sent to Exeter and entered the Academy, but Mr. Morison continued to make his home with the Swain family till his marriage in 1841. Robert Swain went from Exeter to Harvard College, where he entered as a member of the class of 1845; sickness prevented his completing his college course, and he died in the summer of 1844. A memoir of this young man was prepared by Mr. Morison, and subsequently published, though without the author's name. The intimate relationship with the family continued as long as any of its members lived.

In May, 1838, Mr. Morison was ordained as a



minister, and Rev. Ephraim Peabody and he were installed as associate pastors of the First Congregational Society of New Bedford. The ordination and installation took place on the 24th day of May, the sermon being preached by Rev. Caleb Stetson, and the ordaining prayer made by Rev. Francis Parkman, D. D., while the charge was given by Rev. Abiel Abbot, of Peterborough.

The old church in Peterborough had been originally a Presbyterian Church; Londonderry and Peterborough, the two New Hampshire towns settled by the Scotch-Irish, long having the only Presbyterian churches in the State. About the end of the century the Presbyterian form of government had been changed to the Congregational form, but, as many in the congregation were attached to the Presbyterian mode of worship, it was arranged that they should "have the privilege of the meeting-house one Lord's day in the year for the purpose of the Administration of the Lord's Supper, agreeable to the Presbyterian form of worship." This service was performed yearly, generally by Rev. William Morison, D. D., of Londonderry, commonly known as Priest Morison. With the division of New England Congregationalism the Peterborough church went with the Liberal side.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In 1822 a new Presbyterian society was organized, which subsequently adopted the Congregational form of government.

The influences by which Mr. Morison was surrounded at Exeter and at Cambridge were of Liberal character, and he seems to have passed naturally into the ranks of Unitarian Christians, long before he came under the direct influences of Dr. Dewey and Dr. Channing. But throughout his life Christianity was more to him than the tenets of any sect, and there have been few men to whom religion and spiritual life were more real. In the journal are found these words : —

“August 8, 1836. Either religion is nothing or it is the most important subject that can engage the mind ; it is either the one thing needful or an entire delusion of the brain. If it be a dream, why do we pay any attention to it ? why not free ourselves altogether from its delusions ? But if it be the one thing needful, the most important subject that can enter the heart, why do we view it with such indifference ? Why does it make so light an impression upon our minds ? Why are our lives — our thoughts, words, actions — so little affected by it ? He who denies the existence of a God and the truth of all religion may be — nay, he is — mad. But there is at least method in his madness. His insanity is consistent with itself. If he live in open and constant disregard of religious rules, his conduct is at least of a piece with his principles, however insane his principles may be. But he who acknowledges the divine authority of religious duties, and yet lives as though no such obligations

existed ; he who acknowledges the continual presence of a pure and righteous God, and yet hesitates not in private to indulge thoughts, cherish wishes and perform deeds which he would shudder to have made known to his neighbor ; he who acknowledges that this life is but the beginning of a never-ending existence, and yet is as much attached to it, as much engrossed in its gains, honors, hopes, vexations, as though there were nothing beyond ; he, in short, who believes in the commandments of Jesus and the perfection of life and character which he requires, and yet is satisfied with the low standard of morality which the world enjoins, — this man is guilty of inconsistencies which, were they not so common, would strike us with horror and amazement.”

Rev. Ephraim Peabody, with whom Mr. Morison was settled at New Bedford, was born in Wilton, a town not far from Peterborough, and was one year older than Mr. Morison. He had graduated at the Cambridge Divinity School in 1831. In 1857, shortly after Mr. Peabody's death, Mr. Morison wrote : —

“ A little more than thirty years ago, the writer of this article, then a schoolboy at Phillips Exeter Academy, was for a few weeks under Mr. Peabody's instruction. During his last college vacation, he had taken Dr. Abbot's place for a short time. He had then an athletic frame, which, in its careless attitudes and motions, seemed as if it con-

tained a whole magazine of reserved and silent energies. In other respects he had then the same qualities for which he was afterwards distinguished, — the same mild and equable affections, the same enthusiasm for intellectual improvement, the same simplicity and modesty which followed him to the end of life, the same largeness of nature which, in its combination of gentle and noble endowments, made it an impossibility for him to do a small action, or to indulge in any other than generous purposes and feelings.

. . . . .

“While preaching in Boston, he received a call to be settled, with the writer of this article, over the First Congregational Church and Society in New Bedford. On the 23d of May, 1838, they were set apart as associate pastors by the same religious services. Both were in feeble health. For six years they were there together, most of the time in habits of daily and almost hourly intimacy. The survivor dares not trust himself to speak of their relation to one another, or to the people of their charge. The pastors had no plan for their improvement — no professional engagement, however slight; no wedding or funeral, or more private act of personal intercourse with the members of their society; no studies, hardly indeed a thought of any importance — which they did not share in common. During those six years, we do not think that so much as a momentary misunderstanding ever threw its shadow over the pleasantness of their intercourse; or that either was ever

met with a cold or averted look by any one of their people who understood, as few societies could, the delicacy of the relation which their pastors held to them and to one another. In Mr. Peabody there was a largeness of soul, a quick and generous perception of what was due to the feelings and weaknesses of another, a charity seeking not its own, an unpresuming, exacting tenderness of affection, and, above all, a truthfulness of act and speech, which allowed of no concealment on his part, and left no room for suspicion or distrust. In a life singularly favored with the friendship of wise and good men, his friend must always look up with especial thankfulness to Almighty God for those years of unreserved, unbroken, and unclouded intimacy with him, — an intimacy which afterwards underwent no change or diminution. In the last interview between the two, he spoke of it in terms too sacred to be repeated. The last word that his friend heard from his lips was in assent to the hope that this friendship, so long and so closely continued, was not to end here.”<sup>1</sup>

The joint pastorate of these two comparatively young men was exceedingly happy to both of them. Both of them married Salem ladies. Mrs. Peabody, the mother of the pastor, had moved from Wilton to Peterborough, and for many years the mother and one sister of each resided in the same town.

The town of Wilton celebrated the centennial of

<sup>1</sup> *Christian Examiner*, March, 1857.



its settlement on September 25, 1839. The centennial address on that occasion was delivered by Ephraim Peabody. The town of Peterborough celebrated the centennial of its settlement on the 24th of October, 1839. The town first asked Judge Smith to deliver the centennial address, but he, at that time nearly eighty years old, declined, and the address was delivered by John H. Morison. Mr. Morison had the Wilton and Peterborough addresses bound together in a single volume, which he cherished through life.

In the summer of 1840 Mr. Morison made his first trip to the interior of the country, going to New York. He left that city on the 10th of May for Philadelphia; went from Philadelphia to Baltimore by steamboat; from Baltimore to Frederick, Md., by railroad, and thence by stage across the country to Pittsburgh. At Pittsburgh he took a steamboat and followed down the Ohio River to its junction with the Mississippi, and thence went up the Mississippi, reaching St. Louis on the 22d of May. He remained in St. Louis eleven days, staying with friends who had moved there from his native town, but sick nearly all the time. His constitution was never one which adapted itself quickly to changes of climate. From St. Louis he went up the Illinois River by steamboat to Utica, and thence crossed by stage to



Chicago. At Chicago he took a lake steamer to Detroit, and went from there to the home of his sister in Medina, Michigan. At Medina he preached on Sunday, June 14, for a Baptist minister, and thence came to Toledo, where he took a steamer for Buffalo, his sister going with him. He spent a few days at Niagara and Buffalo; went by lake to Oswego, thence by stage to Utica, visited Trenton Falls, where, in climbing a cliff, as he always thought, he nearly lost his life; and came by way of Albany, Bennington, and Brattleboro to Peterborough, where he arrived on the 27th of June. He kept a journal of the trip, but it is of a brief character, giving little more than his route, with some notes which he apparently intended to write up subsequently. A very few thoughts are all that it seems wise to reproduce:—

“West; climate on physical and mental energy; character of West when present impressions from the East shall cease.

“Slavery: it must disappear. But how? Can evil customs of so long a growth be rooted out at once? and shall they be destroyed by laws which, gradually meliorating their severity, shall at length wholly destroy them?

“Fendal ages: serfs, how affected by the progress of society. Slavery: might not laws forbid slaves to be sold out of the State?—husband and wife to be separated, young children to be torn

from their parents? — and so go on enlarging the rights of the slave till he becomes free, allowing time to mellow the fruit of liberty instead of plucking it harsh, crude, and unwholesome? What I wish is to see something going forward for the removal of the worst evil under which our country is groaning.

“Influence of New England, — I have never felt it so much as in the West.”

This journey was one of the three occasions in which he went beyond the Alleghenies. In the summer of 1871 he made a trip for a special purpose to Western Iowa, and shortly before the fire he saw Chicago for the second time. Twelve years later, at the request of his oldest son, he visited Chicago for the third time, and made a hurried trip to the Colorado mountains.

On the 21st of October, 1841, Mr. Morison was married at Salem, Mass., to Miss Emily Hurd Rogers, the daughter of Abner Rogers, H. U. 1800 — who had died before her birth — and Ruth, the daughter of Joseph Hurd, of Charlestown, Mass.; she was the step-daughter of Hon. Daniel Appleton White, of Salem. After boarding for a few months in New Bedford they took a house on the southeast corner of Sixth and Walnut streets, diagonally opposite the Friends' Meeting-house, where on December 19, 1842, their first son was

born. In September, 1843, Mr. Morison retired from his active ministry in New Bedford.

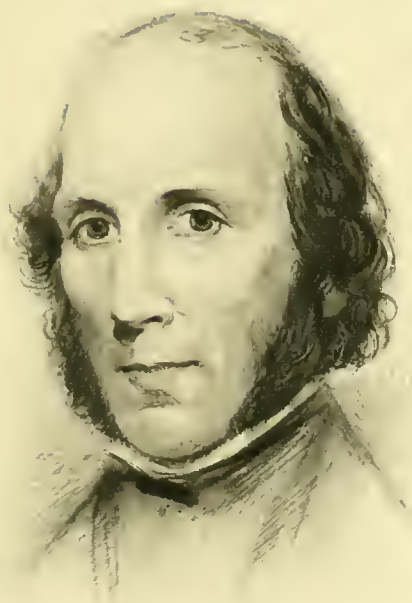
“In September, 1843, I gave up my salary, and asked leave of absence for an indefinite time. This I did partly because I thought Mr. Peabody’s health was then such as to enable him to go on with his work alone, and partly in the hope that change of scene and entire freedom from professional care for a year or two might reëstablish my own health.”<sup>1</sup>

We have already seen how Mr. Morison felt towards Mr. Peabody. That this feeling was fully reciprocated is shown by the following extracts from letters from Mr. Peabody to Mr. Morison: —

“December 18, 1843. . . . It is constantly spoken of, as a matter of course, — without a single exception that I have ever heard of, — that you will return at the end of the year. Could you hear the various expressions of regard and respect which are constantly used, it would be, I am sure, some compensation for the trials which have for a season taken you away from home. It has operated here just as I imagine it generally does when a minister who is really respected and loved is compelled to be absent for a time: it makes him seem nearer to a people, — makes them aware of their real feelings, — and he returns with more weight and influence than when he left.”

“February 26, 1844. . . . But I cannot but

<sup>1</sup> *History of Peterborough*, p. 191.





hope that by adhering to good rules I shall some day see you weigh two hundred,<sup>1</sup> and the possessor of a reasonable amount of health."

"September, 1844. . . . I must say one word more. It is a small matter, situated as we have been, to say that there have been no strifes or discords between us. More than this, in looking back over a connection of six years, I cannot recall one thing on your part which I am not glad to remember. It has been from the outset but a succession of self-denying kindnesses and friendly offices. I know I have made but an imperfect return for all this; but if I have often done what was inconsistent with it, what I have done has not been the true expression of what I have felt. Our connection has been to me one of unmingled happiness. Far more than this, and for which I desire still more devoutly to thank God, our relation has been to me a source of spiritual good. However unworthy I am, I feel that my purposes and character are better for having known you so intimately. There are few changes, in a world of changes, which could give me more pain than to have this connection broken."

The actual pastoral relation was not closed until late in 1845. During these two years he and his family made their home at Salem at Judge White's, and while there he prepared and published the life of his kinsman, benefactor, and friend, Judge

<sup>1</sup> About 1870 Dr. Morison weighed 228 pounds.



Smith.<sup>1</sup> He always looked back on his life in New Bedford with peculiar affection. New Bedford had not yet become a city, but it was at the height of its prosperity in the whaling business. The people there were well-to-do, generous, and open-handed. There he formed friendships with men of his own age which lasted through life; though an invalid at the time, he outlived almost all these friends.

Forty years later, an old man, who had been one of the young men of his parish, wrote of Mr. Morison: —

“Colleague of Dr. Peabody was the Rev. John H. Morison, a divine still living and still engaged in valuable religious labors. It would be impossible to overestimate the importance of the encouragement which a boy of literary aspirations may receive from one older in years, and with that assured position which gives the right to advise. The kindness with which Dr. Morison treated me, the timely suggestions which he offered, the generosity with which he loaned me books, the ways which he found out of intimating to the great commercial crowd around me that he did not despise my juvenile aspirations, I remember now with mingled feelings of pleasure and mortification.

<sup>1</sup> *Life of the Hon. Jeremiah Smith, LL. D.*, Member of Congress during Washington's Administration. Judge of the United States Circuit Court, Chief Justice of New Hampshire, etc. Boston, 1845.

He is the man whose pardon I should ask, if pardon is to be asked of anybody, for my failure to have written a real book. . . . How well Dr. Morison always asserted the dignity of letters I can never forget; nor how he asked me, a poor, raw lad, to lecture at the lyceum of which he was a director. . . . He bore with my foibles, he smiled at the impetuosity of youth. All through these papers I may be called upon to ask pardon of somebody, but the apology which I now make is of tenderer issue and comes from my inmost heart.”<sup>1</sup>

Just before his pastorate a handsome granite church was built by his society. Fifty years later, on the half-century anniversary of the last services in the old church, May 20, 1888, he preached again in New Bedford, and the words which he then uttered are the best illustration of his relations there. His text was: “He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it” (Matt. x. 39). Only that portion of the sermon which was specially connected with the occasion is here given: —

“To-day, as you all know, is the fiftieth anniversary of the last services which your society held in their former church. With that old church I have very deep and affecting associations, and especially with the great preacher who had made

<sup>1</sup> *Reminiscences of a Journalist*, C. T. Congdon, p. 40.

it the centre of moral and religious influences such as have seldom entered so vividly into the hearts of the young, and gone forth with them to mould their characters and enrich their lives. And in this connection may I ask of you the privilege of saying here, in what was once my home, a few words of a more personal character than I have anywhere used before in my public ministrations ?

“ The beautiful mountain town in which I was born, and where my home now is, has for me attractions which no other place can have. Exeter and Cambridge, with their schools in which I had my early intellectual training, and where I formed friendships which have always been an inspiration and a comfort to me, can never be thought of without a thrill of grateful affection. But here I found still another birthplace. From the college I came here, an awkward, diffident, inexperienced youth, just entering upon the responsibilities of manhood, with keen susceptibilities to the attractions of society and the charms of friendship ; with faculties newly awakened, reaching out in every direction for truths more uplifting and life-giving than the schools had furnished ; and with undefined yearnings for something, I knew not what, that might satisfy the deeper wants of the soul. And here, in the cultivated and affectionate homes which so hospitably received me, in intimate relationships with men and women, young and old, of a somewhat different type from those whom I had known before, there seemed to be opening around me a new world. It was as if a new sense had been

born within me. My studies became endowed with a new meaning. Philosophy, laying open new avenues of thought, led me out into regions hitherto unexplored. Coleridge, with ideas half expressed and thereby indefinitely magnified, was to the inexperienced student all the more enchanting because of the clouds of mysticism by which his vaticinations were surrounded. He, more than any other at that time, was the apostle of the higher German philosophy. Wordsworth particularly, at that time, was revealing to his votaries new openings into the heart of nature; was leading them, as it were, by new approaches into a closer union with the soul of the universe. Other poets also, old and new, English and German, were gaining a new ascendancy, leading us by unfrequented paths into ideal realms, and something of the enchantment attached to those ideal creations seemed to attach itself to every-day incidents and events. For science had not yet asserted its right to be the one supreme ruler over every department of human thought and culture.

“These were among the teachers to whom I was greatly indebted when I first came here, fifty-six years ago, and took it upon myself to be in some small way a teacher of others. But, most of all, I was then indebted to that old church, or rather to the great preacher there. He spoke to us as one weighed down by the burden of the message which he was to deliver,—as one intensified in all his feelings, and overawed by a sense of the majesty, the love, and the all-pervading presence of Him in

whose name he spoke. With the exception, perhaps, of half a dozen instances of preaching by as many different men, Dr. Channing being the greatest among them all, I had never then, and to this day have never, heard such preaching as I heard there from Sunday to Sunday for the greater part of a year. It was to me a new revelation of the power of sacred eloquence. Very few sermons retain their freshness and vitality so long as Dr. Dewey's. But, fresh and strong as they were in thought and style, he who reads them now can gain from them no conception of what they were to us who first heard them as they came instinct with the life, the glow, the earnest, reverential spirit of him whose soul seemed to embody itself in his words. I shall never forget what I owe to that great preacher and still greater man, so true everywhere; so inspired with a sacred dignity and power when he rose to speak on great sacred themes; so gentle, affectionate, lowly in heart when we met him in his daily walks; so buoyant in spirit, like a boy let loose from school, in his seasons of recreation; so liberal always, so open to new impressions and new conceptions of truth, down to the latest days of a life protracted far beyond its fourscore years.

“These reminiscences belong to my earliest residence here, fifty-six years ago. A long period of prostrating illness and entire seclusion from study and from society ensued. Then, after years of slow and imperfect restoration to health, spent mostly in this town, it was my privilege fifty years ago to be ordained here the associate pastor of this



society with one of whom I can hardly think without the deepest sense of grateful emotion and affection. He was one of the truest, wisest, saintliest of men ; a man of widely-extended learning ; a man of far-reaching, self-forgetting sympathies and affections, loving and beloved as few men have ever been ; a man in whose large and liberal nature no room could be found for so much as a momentary suggestion that was not generous and manly ; a man very modest in his estimate of himself, if he thought of himself at all ; diffident apparently in his intercourse with others, but in an emergency no man was more independent or self-reliant, and no man braver in troubled times, nor truer to the deepest convictions of his nature, than he. Once, I remember, when we were returning from a succession of parish calls, he said to me, and I heartily assented to what he said : ‘ Among all these homes which we have entered, there is hardly one which is not a pleasure and a privilege to visit.’ So it was here fifty years ago. And the cordial good feeling which united your ministers extended to all the members of their households. A dear child<sup>1</sup> of his, beautiful in person and lovely even beyond what is usual at that most attractive age, dying before she had completed her third year, bore to her grave a name which from its associations could not but bind us all still more closely together.

“ With these great qualities, added to extraordinary personal beauty and personal attractions, our friend was trusted, beloved, and honored as few

<sup>1</sup> Emily Morison Peabody.



men ever are. In any community he could not fail to have a commanding influence, especially with the most intelligent and upright members of society. As a preacher he was grave, impressive, instructive, with a voice sometimes hard, often monotonous; sometimes deep, rich, melodious, filling out as with organ-tones passages of sustained moral dignity and power; sometimes, like the sunlight at evensong, coloring with richest hues pictures of rare poetic beauty, or, most effective of all, flowing as a tearful melody through passages of tender, melting pathos, such as I have never found in any other preacher.

“For five years we worked here together, the labors of the parish pretty equally divided between us,—he the principal, I the assistant. It was a most happy, affectionate union, no shadow of misunderstanding falling on the relationship which bound us to each other and to our people. And it is a great happiness now to see the same friendship drawing our children and children’s children affectionately together.

“You must excuse these personal remarks. When I engaged to preach here this morning, I intended to confine myself entirely to the general subject suggested by the text. But as I went back to those old New Bedford times and experiences I found myself carried away by memories and associations which I could not resist. I know very well that I am nothing to you,—that the place which once knew me knows me no more. Probably hardly more than half a dozen of those whom

I used to meet in this place have, after the sunshine and storms of fifty years, come here to-day to recognize what remains of an old friend. I am nothing to New Bedford, but New Bedford is a great deal to me. Among the sacred spots in which I have tarried or through which I have passed, in a life not unblessed by many privileges and friendships, there is not one which has made a deeper or more lasting impression upon me. Here, I may say, my mind and heart awoke, as never before, to a consciousness of the divine beauty and loveliness which may encircle and pervade our human lives, and bring them into harmony with one another and with the life and the love of God.

“But *my* New Bedford is not yours. I do not find it as I walk your streets, as I pass by your places of business or your homes, or even as I look upon you from this once familiar spot. Other forms are here present to me, some with thoughtful, prophetic souls, patriarchs even then, and looking serenely forward to the change which was soon to pass over them, — fathers and mothers, anxious that their children should be better taught than *they* had been ; young men and women, just awakening to a sense of the momentous realities of life, moved, perhaps entranced, by the first mysterious stirring of affections reaching upward, and dreaming of a joy too great for this world to fulfill ; children, too, — boys, made restless by instincts which tell them of the efforts and labors by which they are to grow up into men ; young girls, too, blossoming into a sphere of maidenly affection, —

these, as I knew and loved and prayed for them fifty years ago, and as I have treasured them up in grateful, thoughtful, reverent remembrance, — these are still my friends. Their lives have entered into mine. Whether they are yet in the body or out of the body is a matter of small concern. They are still my friends, alive to me, in a more exalted condition it may be, with a more vivid consciousness of the heavenly influences and agencies by which we also are compassed about, still my friends. I love to think of them, to go with them as far as I may in the unseen realm where they now are, to live with them as they live on with me.

“And is not this the way in which we all should live? When I think of the friends by whose kindness and love my life has been enriched and blessed through all these years, I often feel that, if I have done no other good than to call out the kindnesses which I have experienced from them, I have not lived in vain. May we all lay up treasures of this kind, looking back upon the past, not with mournful regrets for what is gone, but with thankfulness for the richer gifts into which it has ever been transmuted by time, change, and death; our friends losing their lives only to find them transformed and glorified, laying down their dying members in the dust, and rising from them spiritual and immortal beings! As such may we cherish always the remembrance of them, from each new experience, when it passes away, carrying with us the better thought and life to which it has helped us!

“So with every friend who passes from this to

a more perfect form of being. May we cherish in our heart of hearts a new and dearer companionship as we advance in years, compassed about more and more by a cloud of heavenly witnesses!

“So may we live in them and they in us, our lives more and more hid with them in God! And when this life of faith and hope is resolved into sight, and that which is in part is done away, then shall the shadows be removed from our eyes and we shall know even as we are known.”

## V

### MILTON

IN the fall of 1845 Mr. Morison's connection with the New Bedford Church, which for two years had been of only nominal character, came to an end. Shortly afterwards Mr. Peabody also resigned, and became the minister of King's Chapel, in Boston. On the 6th of January, 1846, Mr. Morison accepted a call to become the minister of the First Parish Church in Milton, Mass. The spirit in which he went there is shown in his letter of acceptance:—

*“To the First Congregational Society in Milton.*

“BRETHREN,—I have received through your clerk a unanimous invitation to settle with you as your pastor. That invitation I now accept, not, however, without some misgiving lest you should be disappointed in one of whom you know so little. I shall go among you with the earnest desire to perform, as far as my abilities and my imperfect health will allow, the solemn duties of a Christian minister. It is only through your kindly sympathy and aid that I can hope for success; and

may He in whom alone we can trust so strengthen, direct, and bless us that the union now to be formed may contribute to our happiness and spiritual improvement !

“Your friend and brother in the faith,

“JOHN H. MORISON.

“SALEM, January 6, 1846.”

His installation took place January 28, Dr. Gannett preaching the sermon. For a short time he boarded with a Mrs. Sumner, quite near the church, in a house afterwards occupied for many years by Mr. Charles Breck. He purchased from Mr. John M. Forbes — who, though always a resident of Milton, had been one of his New Bedford friends — a lot of land on Milton Hill, and there built a house, which he first occupied in June, 1846. This house, to which considerable additions were made at two different periods, was his home for thirty-one years. The next house was occupied by the family of Rev. Henry Ware, Jr., with whom Mr. Morison had lived during the short period in which he kept a boys' school at Cambridge. His oldest son still remembers the hospitable appearance of Mrs. Ware at the first meal eaten in the new house.

It was in Milton that his life's work was done. In 1846 Milton was a country town, and Mr. Morison always spoke of himself as a country minister. Two colonial governors had resided there,



and from its earliest days a few educated and rich people had been among its citizens ; it boasted that the first paper-mill in America had been there, and that the first railroad (the old Granite Railway from the Quincy quarries to the Neponset River) passed through the town ; but the population was generally a farming population of the usual New England type, without the strong individual characteristics which the Scotch-Irish had given to Mr. Morison's native town in New Hampshire. Some old customs and superstitions still survived, as Mr. Morison realized when, calling one day on a recently bereaved family, he was told that the oldest daughter had gone to tell the bees and put mourning on the hives. Boston was at that time a city of about 100,000 people, and its suburban influence had hardly reached Milton, although that town was but seven miles away. The church had been altered and refitted about thirteen years before, but the pews were unpainted and there was no organ. An instrument called a seraphine, with a bass-viol, furnished the accompaniment for the choir. Two services were held every Sunday, the afternoon service being at two o'clock in winter and half an hour later in the summer. From May to November, a Sunday-school preceded the morning service.

The parish soon began to grow, and five years

later, in 1851, the seating capacity of the church proving insufficient, alterations were made by which the old Sunday-school room was added to the body of the church. At this time the walls were frescoed and the pews painted; an organ was put in at about the same time. The natural beauties of the town made it attractive for the summer residence of people whose business detained them in Boston, and the number of this class of families increased rapidly, but during Mr. Morison's active ministry the town did not in any proper sense become a suburban town.

The nearness of Milton to Boston placed this country parish in many ways among the Boston churches, and its minister had the advantage of having many professional brethren of the same denomination within near distances. This was specially important to Mr. Morison, who was still in delicate health. During the first year of his Milton ministry he did not write a new sermon, but adapted old ones to his use.

With Mr. Morison's settlement in Milton the changes and trials which gave so much pathos and interest to his early life came to an end. He had found the position which he was to occupy for the rest of his life, and the remaining years were spent in a quiet, faithful, modest way, such that those who only knew him in his later years had no con-

ception of the struggles through which he had passed in his early life.

Two children were born in the house which he built in Milton, — his second son, Robert Swain, on the 13th of October, 1847, and his daughter Mary, April 30, 1851. Both of his sons were in due time sent to Phillips Exeter Academy, and graduated at Harvard College, the first Morisons of the second generation. The older son studied law, but abandoned that profession before ever practicing, and became a civil engineer. The younger son adopted his father's calling.

In 1861, after the death of her husband, Mrs. White, the mother of Mrs. Morison, left Salem and became a member of Mr. Morison's family, an addition being made to his house for her accommodation. She was then seventy-seven years old, and she continued to reside there till her death thirteen years later. The mother and daughter had the same birthday, the mother being exactly thirty years the older.

Mr. Morison was in 1847 chosen a member of the School Committee of the town of Milton, and worked on that committee almost continuously for twenty years. There was in the town an old academy incorporated in 1798, which, with a small endowment, had a checkered career. In 1847 Mr. Morison was also chosen one of the trustees of this

academy, retaining this position as long as he lived. In 1884 the Forbes family, recognizing the importance of having a good school in the town, endowed and gave new life to the old institution, and, while nothing ever shook the great love which Dr. Morison felt for Exeter Academy, he was glad to see the institution of which he was so long the senior trustee become a real power in education.

In April, 1846, Mr. Morison became the editor of "The Christian Register," and drove from his house to Boston twice a week, though afterwards the construction of a branch railroad to Milton rendered the drive unnecessary. His editorial life covered a long series of years. He retired from the sole editorship of "The Christian Register" at the end of June, 1847, but subsequently in connection with others he was editor from October, 1849, through the year 1851. From January, 1871, through February, 1874, he was sole editor of "The Religious Magazine," which afterwards became "The Unitarian Review," and from January, 1875, through December, 1879, was one of its two editors. Besides his direct work as editor, he was an occasional contributor to various religious periodicals.

In 1852 he prepared a little book entitled "Scenes from the Life of Jesus," which was published by Crosby, Nichols & Company as one of a series of Sunday-school manuals. He devoted

much time to the preparation of a commentary on the Gospels, designed specially for general use. The first volume, which covered the Gospel of Matthew, was completed and published in 1860.<sup>1</sup> It was the original intention to make this part of a commentary of the whole New Testament, of which Mr. Morison was to prepare the portion covering the Gospels, and Andrew P. Peabody, D. D., the remainder. The volume on Matthew, which was the result of many years of labor, was the only part ever completed. It was Dr. Morison's principle in writing this book, whenever he could find his own idea clearly expressed by another, to give it as a quotation from that writer; this method gave the appearance of a compilation to a book which the author had really worked out himself. In the later years of his life his views upon critical questions concerning the Gospels were somewhat modified; and, while he never thought of re-writing the book, he did think of inserting a note in later editions to say that the book took the Gospel as we have it, without intending to go into the question of the authenticity of its different parts. After the publication of this volume he devoted his spare time to the study of the Fourth Gospel for many years. He found that he could

<sup>1</sup> *Disquisitions and Notes on the Gospels: Matthew.* Boston, 1860.



not carry on his studies as he wished without a fuller knowledge of the German language, and determined to master this language for the prosecution of his work, but other work prevented his carrying the study so far as to accomplish his purpose.

In 1858 his Alma Mater, Harvard University, conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Divinity.

In May, 1861, he preached the annual sermon before the Massachusetts Convention of Congregational Ministers in the Brattle Street Church; his text was Matthew xvi. 25.

In 1860 he was the annual preacher to the Alumni Association of the Divinity School at Cambridge.

The bicentennial of the settlement of the town of Milton was celebrated on the 11th of June, 1862. On the two following Sundays Mr. Morison preached sermons suggested by this celebration, from which the following extracts are taken : —

“Our thoughts are naturally carried back to the elements of our New England society. First, there was the Church. The church which came over to Plymouth in the Mayflower was in itself a complete and independent organization, and a type of the rest. According to his words who has said, ‘Wherever two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them,’ those



devout men and women had come together in their Master's name, and bound themselves together by a religious compact which has served as a type of our whole civil polity. After the pattern of the church was the town, with its local institutions and laws, a separate and almost independent organization, so that, if it should be cut off, as the Plymouth colony was for a time, from all other communities and sovereignties, it might have in itself the right to execute all the functions of civil government. These townships, borrowing their life as they did in our early history from the church, are the peculiar feature of our New England civilization. More than three quarters of the money spent and of the most important legislation of the country is decided upon in these primary meetings of the people, and they alone, self-supporting and self-regulating as they are, make a republic like ours possible.

“But the town organization is made possible only by the more vital influences which are at work within itself. Of these, the Christian church has held the most important place. It has been made in no small measure the medium of religious instruction and religious life to each individual soul. Its divine spirit enters the school, and makes knowledge a power, not for evil, but for good. It enters the home, purifies its affections, softens its asperities, consecrates the marriage ties, welcomes the little child into its bosom, opens its blessed promises to the dying, and lifts up the hearts of the sorrowing by its words of immortal faith at the very portals of the tomb.

“Say what we may of the stern creed of our ancestors, and its hardening influence on harsh and ungainly natures, it was not all harshness. In the sentiment of reverence which it fostered, in the habit which it encouraged of looking with profound and earnest thought into the solemn and awful mysteries of our religion, in the unshrinking courage with which it accepted whatever it believed to be a divine truth, however severe its exactions, it cultivated some of the sublimest qualities which belong to the human character. Those ancient men who first trod these roads and looked upon these hills, or gazed off upon the distant waters, carried with them a faith which made the earth the footstool of God’s throne, and themselves the chosen servants of God to establish here in the wilderness a divinely ordered commonwealth, rich in all the promises and fruits of holy living.

. . . . .

“There is no picture of the past so attractive to me as that of a Christian home. In carrying our thoughts back to the early settlers at times when every nerve was strained to meet the physical wants of the day, we see that there was always found a season, not only in the church for public worship, but at home for prayer and religious instruction, and the cultivation of those inward graces which draw together the members of a household by something stronger than the ties of interest or habit, and throw over the opening intelligence of the child visions more sacred and inspiring than the earth can give. In those visions

of heavenly glory, those thoughts of near access and solemn accountability to God, the child's whole nature was bathed and made alive. They touched the inmost springs and motives of conduct, and moulded his views and habits of life. While the characters thus fashioned were to some extent marked by the severity which grew out of the theology of the age and the hardships to which the men were exposed, they were also filled with the tender sympathies and affections which are always cherished by a heartfelt intercourse with God, and which cannot be separated from the religious nurture of a Christian home.

“In each of these homes the presiding genius and divinity of the place was the Christian mother. She was the centre of kindly influences and attractions. Out-of-door cares and toils tasked to the utmost the time and strength of the father. But she, not less heavily burdened with bodily labor, — even in her sorrows perhaps finding no leisure for grief, but working, and weeping while she worked, — was always there, the dignity of her outward demeanor subdued by the solitudes and yearnings which drew her towards her children. Amid the hardships which might have been caused by the severity of their creed, or the stern necessities which pressed upon them and hemmed them in, here was a never-failing fountain opening within their homes, and supplying them with the soft, sweet waters of domestic peace. The birth of a child was a new evangel, calling into exercise all the tenderness and strength of a mother's heart.

Her self-denying virtues, her conjugal affections, her intelligence, her faith, in itself the evidence of things not seen, and the deeper religion of the heart, were all employed in her domestic relations. 'When my mother comes from her chamber where she has been praying,' said a young man of rare intellectual gifts,<sup>1</sup> 'her face is like the face of an angel.' So has many a mother been glorified in the eyes of her children.

"And such were the mothers whom we love to look back upon as the pride and glory of the days that are gone. They, under God, formed the great men who, by their far-seeing wisdom, their strong wills, and sublime faith, were always equal to the emergencies of their time, who elevated the tone of public morals, enlarged the intelligence and strengthened the virtues of the age in which they lived, and thus laid, here on this North American continent, the foundations of a mighty empire, so deep and firm that neither the passions of wicked men nor the gates of hell shall prevail against it.

"It is the merciful infusion of domestic love and kindness that saves men from becoming a race of infidels and savages. Man gladly accepts the aid of a nature more delicate than his own, more open to religious impressions and to the finer influences that are around us. While he seems to be the controlling mind, he willingly subjects himself to her finer instincts. In recognizing the original differences of organization between the sexes, he joyfully acknowledges her superiority in some

<sup>1</sup> Ralph Waldo Emerson.

things, as he practically asserts his own superiority in others. By adjusting itself to constitutional diversities and seeking harmony in variety, gaining mutual support by mutual submission and respect, society here in New England has done much, though much remains to be done, to make the position of woman honorable, and her influence what it should be. Relations thus mutually helpful, affections kept alive by acts of kindness every day reciprocated, cannot be otherwise than blessed. The longer they continue the more alive they are. And when, after a long union, the connection seems to be dissolved by death, then all the more touching is the pathos of the separation, and the stronger the assurance which the heart finds of a reunion. An aged woman whom I knew, gazing tearfully on the face of her husband who had just ceased to breathe at the age of eighty-five or eighty-seven years, exclaimed: 'O Billy, Billy! shall I never hear your voice again? We have lived together more than fifty years, and I never heard from you an unkind word.' I was with a man eighty-four years old, who supposed himself to be, as he was, almost on the borders of eternity. 'I would gladly die,' he said, 'if I could only be sure of meeting my wife' — who had died some years before — 'and knowing her again.' These are the feelings fostered by long lives of mutual fidelity and kindness in the dearest domestic relations. They give the assurance of peace and happiness on earth, and reach on in hope and love to that world where ties apparently broken here shall be united again."



In 1867 Rev. George H. Hepworth organized a Divinity School in Boston, with an idea of training young men of moderate means and education to enter the Unitarian ministry, expecting to supply a class of ministers somewhat like many Methodist preachers. This school had a short life, ending in the year 1869. In this school Dr. Morison took the position of Professor in the Exegesis and Literature of the New Testament. A gentleman well qualified to judge, from his intimate connection with the school, writes of his work: —

“His own Book of Commentaries was in use, and his services to the school most valuable. His talk with the young men discussed not only his particular subject of instruction, but covered the whole field of ministerial duty and work in a practical way that was especially helpful. No one connected with the school was more highly appreciated or more beloved.”

He entered earnestly into the discussion between the two wings of the Unitarian denomination in regard to the preamble of the Constitution of the National Conference of Unitarian and other Christian Churches. It was a subject concerning which he felt deeply, and he prepared an article on it which he published under the title of “Christian Liberty” in “The Religious Magazine” for May, 1870, and from which the following paragraphs are taken: —



“ Wherever two or more persons form a partnership, there must be to some extent a surrender of individual preferences. As far as relates to the concerns of the partnership, there cannot be with either of the parties the same liberty of action that he had before. The conditions to which each one submits are usually stated in the articles of agreement. . . . Most of the moral and religious enterprises of our day are carried on by means of voluntary associations. The Christian church and congregation belong to agencies of this class, and are distinguished from others only by their origin, the long succession of ministrations through which they have come down to us, and the vital influences which they have had and still have on the greatest concerns which can address themselves to a human being.

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“ Here is one essential fact which is to be borne in mind. Another fact, equally essential in order to a just consideration of the subject, must also be borne in mind. The most important concerns in the life of every man are those which affect himself personally. The most sacred rights are the rights of the individual. The most effective offices of religion are those which belong to the individual soul in its secret relations with God.

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“ There is a sacredness in the individuality which God has thrown around every human soul. Every man has a right to freedom from intrusion within the hallowed seclusion of his own thoughts. He

who made us does not forcibly obtrude himself upon us there, even to oblige us to do what is right. We cannot lay bare the secret organs of life in a plant, and intrude ourselves on the mysterious operations which are going on there, without marring the perfect work which God is carrying out by his own secret processes. Even the delicate tissues of a plant shrink with an instinctive shudder from such an exposure and desecration. Far less can we, without serious harm, interfere by the intrusion of foreign agencies on what is most vital and essential in the spiritual life and growth of a human being.

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“In the faith of Jesus, and in the grander liberty of those who believe in him, we endeavor to live. Our churches are Christian churches. Most of them accept the New Testament as the only rule of faith and practice. But we do not say that every word in our English version is the inspired word of God. We leave it to those who are most competent as scholars to determine for us precisely what reading is to be preferred. We adopt no particular theory of inspiration or of interpretation. We study into these things; we write and preach upon them; we write and preach on what we regard as the great theological doctrines of our religion. But we do not frame our opinions into articles of faith or conditions of Christian fellowship.

“Can we go farther than this without going plainly and palpably beyond the religion of Jesus?

As a Christian church, can we ask for a larger liberty? Giving up the New Testament as truthful statements of facts, giving up Jesus as the head of the church, we may enter into a wider range of inquiry, we may accept doctrines beyond what he taught, we may be seekers after truth; but are we seekers after Christian truth? Is the liberty to reject Christ and his teachings a Christian liberty? We do not condemn those who look on the Gospels as they do on other writings, and view Christ as they do other teachers, and, leaving them behind, go on in search of some grander dispensation. They may be conscientious and good men. We do not judge them; neither can we allow them to judge us, or to carry us away from our inheritance as believers in Christ. Living in the free atmosphere of the Gospels, recognizing Christ as the head of the church which he came into the world to establish, feeling in it the beauty and the power of that grand communion of Christian souls who lived in him, and of Christian sentiments which are breathed out from him in all his words and acts, we should be false to our holiest convictions if we should give up his name. To speak of a church without Christ would be for us an utter perversion of language. To leave out the name of Christ, in order to satisfy the scruples of another and allow him to join with us, would be to sacrifice both means and end. We must be honest. Can he be called a Mohammedan who rejects the teachings of Mohammed? or he be called a Christian who rejects the teachings of Christ?

“If there are those who think they have found, or who expect to find, a truer faith, a grander and more uplifting system of morals, of course they do not accept the teachings of Jesus, nor desire to be called by his name. But while we hold our minds open to all truth, and gladly welcome it from whatever quarter it may come, — from philosophers and sages who lived thousands of years ago, or from devout and inspired seekers after truth who have lived in our own time, or who now live, — we have found nothing yet, and we expect to find nothing, which will carry us so far as he does into the depths of divine truth and of the infinite love. We believe that in ages yet to come, as in ages past, the spiritual life which is to redeem and purify the world must come from him. In other associations we may consent to live under a constitution which leaves out all mention of his name; but, in the church instituted by him, Christian truth is our daily bread. Christian life is that which we seek to live ourselves and to awaken in others; and Christ himself is, under God, the great central teacher and inspirer. To give him up, and with him the ideas, sentiments, emotions, affections which gather round his name and bind us together in fellowship with him and with one another, is not to give up a form, but the substance and life of our religion.

“This faith in Christ and the Gospels, making him the chief corner-stone in our belief, has been always a distinguishing feature with those who have belonged to our communion. Historical Chris-

tianity has nowhere found abler defenders, from the days of Grotius and Lardner down to the time of Channing and Norton, than in our body.

“But, side by side with this earnest assurance and assertion of the truthfulness of the Christian records, there has been always, from the time of John Milton, a love of liberty rebelling against all attempts to restrain freedom of thought, even when employed on the most sacred of all themes. While we cannot consent to expunge from our church covenants the name and the authority of Christ, we respect the conscientious convictions of others, and shrink from imposing Christian views upon them as conditions of Christian fellowship. We may seek to answer the question, What is Christianity? What are the divine truths which we claim that it has given to the world? What is the exact nature and rank of that great being towards whom the holiest and greatest of men have turned with thankful and loving reverence, and who is still, more than all other teachers, the great illuminating and quickening power among men,—the hope, the joy, the refuge of those who have no other hope or refuge left? These are questions of momentous importance. But they are not vital questions; they relate only to the interpretation which men may put on the language of Jesus, or the explorations which we may make into subjects that lie perhaps beyond us. While we give our explanations of these things, we would leave every one free to accept or reject our conclusions.

“We do not insist upon particular views of Chris-



tianity as essential to the Christian name. Our denominationalism consists very much in our freedom from all denominational peculiarities. Most of us are Unitarians, but we do not insist on a belief in Unitarianism as a test of Christian fellowship. We fall back on the Gospels as truthful narratives of fact, and on the great central personage whom they reveal to us. If the fathers, who established two centuries ago the church of which the writer of this article is the pastor, should return to it to-day with their Calvinistic views unchanged, they would find nothing in its articles of faith to prevent their entering into it, and carrying it on, without altering one word of its covenant, or giving up one article of their faith. As a Christian church and society we hold ourselves responsible to God, and have no doctrinal tests which can exclude any one who claims to be a Christian disciple, and who as a Christian asks to be received among us.

“Our Christian views we cherish as the precious fruits which have grown in this atmosphere of free and liberal thought. If we should endeavor to perpetuate our views by narrowing for others the freedom which we have ourselves enjoyed, we should destroy the very conditions by which our Christian views and characters have been formed.

“Beyond the fact of declaring it to be a Christian institution, we are careful to do nothing to exclude from the church any one of correct life



and habits who modestly and reverently asks to be admitted. On the other hand, we are careful to do nothing to 'compel men to come in' when they are not drawn by the promptings of the spirit within them. We do not seek to create a crisis or exigency which, by an artificial pressure, may interfere with their deliberate convictions, and, in the contagious enthusiasm or excitement of the season, bring in those who are not prepared to enjoy or profit by its ordinances. It is possible that we may have carried this principle of non-interference too far. We present the subject, state the grounds of our convictions, converse with those who are willing to hear, and invite all who will to join us; but we do not lay upon it the stress and emphasis which are given to it by those who believe that partaking of the Lord's Supper is essential to salvation.

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"In seeking this more perfect liberty, we are following our own convictions, and we are conforming to the traditions which have come down to us from the honored men of a former generation. We are only obeying what may be regarded as the common law of the Christian communion to which we belong. Liberal Christianity was cherished by many of our greatest men fifty years ago, not as an embodiment of peculiar doctrines, but as the rule and substance of Christian liberty, as a moral force diffusing itself everywhere; a spiritual leaven, finding its way into the purest and best minds everywhere, especially among the young, welcoming them to wider fields and more vital methods of investiga-

tion, awaking freer thoughts, emancipating them from unreasonable and arbitrary canons of Biblical interpretation, calling them into a grander liberty, loosening everywhere by insensible degrees the chains which the narrow dogmatism of our New England church had been throwing over religious inquiries by binding all searchers after truth to arrive at certain predetermined conclusions. This cry of liberty was hailed as the omen and watchword of a great movement by thousands of thinking minds outside of our own communion. Even those who dreaded and opposed it caught something of its spirit, on account of their enthusiastic love of liberty and their faith in free inquiry.

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“In establishing a National Conference to awaken a new interest, and to furnish new facilities for the advancement of Christian truth and life, by a single clause it was baptized into the name of Christ, and thus recognized and set apart by those who founded it as a Christian organization. The preamble is as follows: ‘Whereas the great opportunities and demands for Christian labor and consecration at this time increase our sense of the obligations of all disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ to prove their faith by self-denial, and by the devotion of their lives and possessions to the service of God and the building up of the kingdom of his Son.’

“Here was an expression in accordance with the covenants in our churches. But, before the consti-

tution was adopted, the other characteristic of our denomination, its extreme sensitiveness on the matter of religious freedom, had shown itself in a preliminary resolution offered by the business committee that all resolutions and declarations of the Convention should only be regarded as expressing the opinions of the majority, 'claiming no other than a moral authority over the members.' At a subsequent meeting, this clause, with some alteration, was adopted by the Conference as the ninth article of its constitution, affirming 'that all the declarations of this Conference, including the preamble and constitution, are expressions only of its majority, committing in no degree those who object to them,' etc.

"This ninth article, strictly construed and applied, undoubtedly nullifies all the rest. The declarations in the constitution that the 'officers shall consist of a president,' etc., that the 'constitution may be amended . . . by a vote of not less than two thirds,' 'commit in no degree those who object to them.' We doubt if there is another association in the land, formed for practical purposes, whose fundamental laws so cancel and destroy one another. The declaration in the preamble was an honest declaration, to which no one claiming to be a Christian could object. But, lest some one should be offended by the name of 'the Lord Jesus Christ,' this last explanatory, or rather nullifying, clause was added. We love and honor the men who proposed it; but, were it not for the gravity both of the subject and of the occasion, we

could hardly view their action in a serious light. The most obvious parallel is to be found in the 'Midsummer Night's Dream,' where he who is to enact the part of a lion, through dread of terrifying the audience is to tell them plainly in the midst of his performance that he is no lion, but only 'Snug the joiner.'

. . . . .

"But, in all seriousness, what shall we say? Lord Macaulay, in the tenth chapter of his History, speaking of the resolution of Parliament which declared the throne vacant, in a preamble containing two opposite and inconsistent reasons, says: 'Logic admits of no compromise. The essence of politics is compromise. It is therefore not strange that some of the most important and most useful political instruments in the world should be among the most illogical compositions that ever were penned. . . . In fact, the one beauty of the resolution is its inconsistency. . . . To the real statesman, the single important clause was that which declared the throne vacant; and, if that clause could be carried, he cared little by what preamble it might be introduced.' These words, in the general idea which they convey, seem to have been written for the case before us, and we accept them as suggesting the best excuse that can be given.

. . . . .

"We believe that some of the most modest, earnest, and conscientious of our young preachers are sometimes deterred from believing in Christ, not

from a want of evidence, but from a morbid fear that they may come to such convictions because it is for their interest to do so. Like a man standing on a plank a hundred feet from the ground, they feel such a dread of losing their belief that they become confused and fall. We call to mind a young minister who entered on his work and preached with remarkable success, but who began to doubt whether he had the faith which a Christian minister ought to have, and under that impulse gave up his parish and engaged in the studies of another profession. We know nothing of his secret or personal history. But it may be that the dread of not believing may have created the ghostly apparitions and doubts which he feared. And now that this constraint is taken away, may not his mind act more freely in that direction, and be able to hold with a firmer grasp the reasons by which he should be guided, and see with a clearer vision the truths which once seemed clouded and unreal? More than one able and conscientious minister we have known who has gone through this experience, and who has come back from other occupations to the profession of his early love with new strength of conviction, with new zeal and enthusiasm, and with a gentleness, a modesty, a calm maturity of wisdom, which have added greatly to his influence.

“Towards these and such as these, through the dark and trying days when they long for sympathy and kindness, and are in the greatest need of intellectual support and guidance, shall we turn a for-



bidding look, and close our Eden against them by 'a flaming sword turned every way' to keep them from the 'tree of life'? Of course we would not. No one among us would knowingly do such a thing as that. It would be inhuman as well as unchristian. But it becomes us to consider whether adopting more stringent rules of faith and discipline, at this time, would not be a step — and a pretty important step, too — in this direction. How is it with our young men, those who, in their matured experience and the fullness of their powers, are to be our most accomplished and efficient ministers? Except in very rare instances, they do not grow up faultless angels all the way from the cradle to the pulpit. In all denominations, many of the most beloved and honored ministers have gone through a strange preparatory discipline. St. Augustine, — let any one read his 'Confessions' who would learn a lesson of toleration towards young students of theology; John Newton, the master of a slave-ship; John Bunyan, from his own account a blasphemer and infidel, fighting with Satan, and often getting worsted in the contest; Henry Ward Beecher, an atheist, or thinking himself so, though at that very time, and because of his unbelief, his father, with his large faith and his keenness of insight into the workings of the human soul, saw the tokens and promise of a minister of Christ. Even our Channing, who seems to us to have been always such an example of saintly purity and faith, has told us, with strong emotion, of a period in his life when, in consequence of the doctrines in which



he had been educated, it would have been an unspeakable relief to him to know that there was no God, and that death was an everlasting sleep. The immature experiments of young men, both in faith and practice, their wild and inconsistent ideas and actions, are to be regarded very tenderly. We remember how dangerous it used to be to confine too closely in the autumn the colts which had been running at large on the mountains all the summer, lest they should be crippled for life. There must be freedom for young men, in order to secure the finest elements of character.

. . . . .  
“We have sought, with much anxiety, to reconcile the claims of liberty and truth, without doing violence to either, so as to determine, as far as we may, where our duty lies. We have sought to promote the cause of Christian faith without interfering with the freedom of thought which belongs as a right to every one who is really engaged in the search after truth. We have endeavored to put aside all personal feeling, and to abide by what we believe to be most in harmony with the spirit of Christ, which is the spirit of truth, and therefore best fitted to extend this kingdom in the world. In the words of one of the wisest as well as wittiest of the old English divines, ‘no discreet person will conclude our faith the worse because our charity is the more ;’ and, on the other hand, we trust that no man will account our charity the worse because our reverence for truth is even more than our love of liberty. In the grand field of Christian thought

and enterprise, both move on in loving fellowship. It is by the free exercise of our minds under the inspiration of the Almighty that we are led into all truth. And it is the truth that makes us free. Liberty is enlarged and strengthened by the helps which it draws from our Christian faith, and is never crowned with so divine a dignity as when, kneeling reverently before the cross of Christ, it goes forth in his name to loose every bond, and reveal itself in all its beauty to a longing world, as the glorious liberty of the sons of God, even the liberty with which Christ shall make us free."

But through this whole period his principal work was in his own parish. He was a very faithful parish minister, and was never kept away from his people by the most virulent contagious disease. He never allowed any personal engagement, however important, to stand in the way of his ministerial duties. His sympathy and power of consolation made him welcome not only in his own parish but in neighboring towns, where he was often called to attend funerals of people whom he knew but slightly.

He was still delicate, and unable to do the work of a strong man. Occasionally he would be absent from Milton for a few weeks at a time, but the limits of his journey never exceeded visits to his brothers in Baltimore, trips to the White Mountains, and in later years to Mount Desert. He

always continued to make frequent visits to his native town.

He was always fond of the best English writers, and especially of the poets. For more than ten years he usually had a weekly class of ladies, who met in his study, and were stimulated by his impressive reading of the great poets. In this class he read not only English writers from Chaucer to Tennyson, but extended his work to the Greek poets and to Dante.

In 1867 his brother James, after a ten years' residence in California, returned to New England, and in the following year settled as a physician in the neighboring town of Quincy. From this time on, the two brothers met several times a week.

Dr. Morison always remembered the help which he had received as a boy from the free library in Peterborough. When the question of establishing a public library at Milton came up, he supported it with enthusiasm. One of the most earnest speeches he was ever heard to make at a public meeting was made in the Milton Town Hall on this subject. It turned the sentiment of the meeting in favor of the library. The library was established in 1870, and he was one of the first Board of Trustees. He devoted a great deal of time to the selection of the books with which it was originally

equipped. He was reëlected a Trustee so long as he was a citizen of Milton.

Mr. Morison became bald as a young man ; his hair was almost white before he was fifty. When he first came to Milton he wore side whiskers, but shaved his chin. He subsequently allowed his full beard to grow, shaving only the upper lip. Before passing middle life he had acquired the dignified, patriarchal look which he kept till the end. When he was but fifty-three years old, the "Peterborough Transcript" contained the following : —

"Rev. John H. Morison, of Milton, Mass., a native of this town, preached to a very full house at the Unitarian Church last Sabbath. His hoary locks speak warningly of the advance of time, yet his vigorous step and keen intellect show that he understands 'how not to grow old.' "

After the close of the war his health improved, and he took more satisfaction in his work than he had ever done before, but the example of Judge Smith was always in his mind, and he used to say that he did not intend to preach after he was sixty. He extended this time, however, and continued sole pastor of the Milton church for twenty-five years, when he was nearly sixty-three. At the end of this period, on the last Sunday before the ordination of a colleague, he preached a sermon enti-

tled, "The Beauty of Change," which is appropriately given here : —

But we shall all be changed. — 1 Cor. xv. 51.

He hath made everything beautiful in his time. — Eccl. iii. 11.

"Change is written on every earthly thing as a part of the law of God. But, being ordained by him, and interwoven into the constitution of the universe, it cannot of itself be an evil. He hath made everything beautiful in his time. The evolution from a lower to a higher condition, from a lower to a higher order of being, must of necessity be a change. But it is nevertheless a great gain. There is usually something painful in the processes by which its ends are accomplished; and even when our gains are the greatest it is not without some uneasy sensations that we look forward to it, nor without some sharp feelings of regret that we look back on the altered circumstances amid which we lived before the change took place. Nothing could induce us to go back into the old life and live it over again. Yet, as it comes up to us through our affections, we see how beautiful it was in its time, and how much of what is dearest to us now had its seed-time there. With a certain tender regret and almost longing, we think of the home, the incidents, the friends which once performed so important an office for us, but which, so far as this world is concerned, can have no place with us except in our silent memories and affections. How beautiful are they to us as we see them lying away back there in the distant horizon and twilight of



our childhood! How much, through our memories and our affections, are they still doing to make our lives beautiful and sacred! How much would our present lot be impoverished, how much of its richest joy and satisfaction would be taken out of it, if there were in the past no spots thus sacred to our hearts, — no holy land where dear ones, now in heaven, once lived with us, teaching us how to live, and then, changed from mortal to immortal by their rising into higher realms, revealed to us the possibility and the reality of something better than the eye can see!

“We shall all be changed. Whatever lives on earth changes. Life itself is but a process of change, and the more intense it is, the more rapid is the change. No morning sun looks on the same world that it lighted up the day before. No friend who has been absent from us a week finds us precisely as he left us. Manners and men, institutions and those who live under them, the outward universe and the mind of man, never continue in one stay. There is no permanent abiding-place for us, and, if there were, we could not remain in it. The times are always changing, and we, unconsciously to ourselves, are changing with them. When we eat, we take in new supplies of fuel to feed the secret fires which are consuming the old, and substituting for it a new organization through every part of our bodies. By this double process of destruction and creation, we live from moment to moment. Like the bush seen by Moses at Mount Horeb, which burned with fire and yet was not



consumed, we are always on fire; and it is of the Lord's mercies, through his wonderful adaptation of means to ends, that we are not consumed. We are changing always while we live, and when we die 'we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.' And as in life every change has its beneficent purpose and is beautiful in its time, each season fulfilling its purpose for us and helping us on with riper faculties to the new opportunities which await us, so the last great change that men recognize on earth hath God made, more than all the rest, beautiful in his time, if only we turn to their fitting use the opportunities and privileges which are granted to us.

"Every day is working its silent changes in our bodies and our minds. Every day is bringing something to us, and carrying something away. There can be no successful resistance to that law, and we cannot evade it. But it is a merciful provision. It is a benignant part of the great benignant plan of Him who doeth all things well, and who hath made everything beautiful in its time.

"There are two things on which our highest success in life must depend. One, and indeed the great thing, is to use our opportunities while we have them. The next thing is to give them up gracefully and cheerfully when their time is ended. Instead of mourning over what is going from us, we should turn ourselves to the new opportunities which take its place, and get from them all that we can. The change is not necessarily a sad one. It may be just the allotment which is best fitted to

carry us on, to teach us new lessons, to open before us new fields of usefulness and enjoyment, to exercise new faculties, to strengthen our faith, to deepen our experience of God's love, to refine and subdue our hearts, and bring us into more perfect sympathy with the Divine Will.

"A change has come. We must give up, perhaps, a cherished occupation. It has been very dear to us. Our life has been bound up in it. We found it a privilege, a comfort, a joy to us, and we had hoped so to use it as to make it also a comfort and a joy to others. But our time for it is past. What then? Is everything gone from us? By no means. This withdrawal of one privilege may be only an opening into another and richer field. There may be a momentary pang as we turn away from beloved walks, and look forward into new scenes and labors. But we accept the new attitude of things. We adjust our thoughts and our conduct to it. We find new food for our minds, new interests for our hearts to expand in, new sources of usefulness and happiness. And then we begin to see how beneficent the plan is that reaches through all things, and makes each separate incident, each separate moment, an instrument connected with all the rest, for the orderly and harmonious advancement of whatever should be most precious to us.

"I remember being very indignant, many years ago, when, by some political management, Nathaniel Hawthorne was turned out of a small government office by which he had been able to earn a

scanty support for his family. 'What,' we asked, 'will become of this poor man now? What is to save him and them from severe want? What is there that he can do?' So we asked, and could give no hopeful answer to our question. But God, who had endowed that man with such a wonderful gift of genius, had something better for him to do than could be found in a subordinate department of the Salem Custom House. He therefore drove him out from that place, which could only cramp and impoverish his soul. And, being driven out from it, he was thrown back upon himself, and in the marvelous creations of his imagination he found other ways of earning his bread, while at the same time he furnished other and better supplies to hundreds of thousands who had learned that man cannot live by bread alone. Had it not been for the fearful disappointment to which he was subjected, he might never have known what capabilities there were bound up within him, and the world would never have known the loss which it sustained.

"Here is an illustration which may apply in some degree to every one of us. We have not his intellectual powers. But we all of us have moral and spiritual faculties capable of an expansion beyond all that even his imagination could conceive of. And often it is only by being forced away from one after another of our chosen haunts where we are quietly earning our bread that we are enabled to come to ourselves, and to find the infinite resources of Christian faith and love with which God has endowed us, and which He is waiting by

these new and better methods to unfold within us, that so they may be made a blessing to ourselves and to all around us. How many a self-denying act has thus been awakened into being! How many a homely virtue has thus been cherished in the heart till it came forth to shine with a celestial purity and radiance! How many thoughts, warmed and illuminated by a heavenly spirit, have thus been called from within us, and made to shed their joy and hope in our daily paths! How many souls have thus been born into a loftier experience, so as to throw a diviner light around them in their passage through the world!

“The order of nature and the order of Providence unite in carrying us on through this universal process of change. We cannot withstand or retard its motion. If we seek to interfere with it, we shall be thrust rudely away, or ground to powder. But if we adjust ourselves to it, yielding willingly where we must yield, seeking to make each incident or event do its fitting part, then there can be no failure. Whether we succeed or not in our present work, all is well with us. The blessings and mercies of Heaven fall upon us. Each moment of time, greeting us as it comes from the hand of God with his benediction, stays just long enough to deliver its message, to fulfill its mission, and then it passes on.

“Moments, days, and the longer periods of time thus come to us, every one with a personal message to each individual soul. Childhood and youth, manhood and age, each has for each of us its appro-

priate gift, endowment, occupation, and passes on, leaving us in the hands of that which shall come next. And it becomes us to do now the work appropriate to the present season, not impatient to leave it before the time, nor seeking to extend it beyond its appointed limits. There is a time for preparation and a time for work. There is a time to assume heavy responsibilities and a time to lay them down. The important changes of life may well make us thoughtful. At such seasons our minds naturally go back to ask of the days that are past whether we have been wise and faithful in the use we have made of them, and forward with some questionings as to what lies before us. We can hardly pass the invisible boundary that separates one year from another without some unusual seriousness of mind.

“ We may not be saddened. We may be full of happy anticipations. If we have sought earnestly to do our duty we have nothing to fear, and there are inward satisfactions which can be weighed to our advantage against any amount of worldly discomfort or success. This we feel, and more than this, when we look back through any considerable period ; we see how kindly all things have worked together, and formed a part of the divinely ordered plan of our lives.

“ The secret of success, in the best meaning of that sadly abused word, lies in the devotion of ourselves to the highest ends, engaging in our life’s work with all our hearts, using all our faculties, taking advantage of all the opportunities that are



offered, with a perfect trust in God, doing each day the most and best that we can. When the time has come for leaving any particular work, then we are to submit willingly and gracefully, giving up that which is no longer ours, accepting the new situation, the new condition which God offers, with grateful and affectionate trust. He who has labored earnestly through the heat of the day may perhaps be pardoned if he should seek to bear a lessening burden, or even to rest a little amid calmer studies and meditations, before the lengthening shadows, which tell him that his day is far spent, are quite lost in the night in which no man can work. If he cannot put forth his strength as he once did, perhaps his mission now may better be accomplished by the exercise of a needed patience. If he may not influence or control events by active efforts, perhaps he may do something by a wise forbearance, a gentle tolerance, a greater charity to others, a more loving submission to a higher and better will than his. If, in the days of our strength, we have really sought to act in concert with the Divine Mind, we must have acquired, to some extent, the habit not only of doing what we could, but of leaving cheerfully and trustingly with Him what we could not do, — the habit of seeing his hand everywhere, in the wise ordering, the kindly succession, the wonderful adjustment, — everywhere change, and yet everything beautiful in his time.

“To this universal and beneficent law of God I bow in grateful and joyful obedience. The time is



come when it is better for you and for me that a younger life should exercise its functions in this place. The truths of our religion are as old as the throne of God, and can never change. But we are all changing. Each new generation has its peculiar way of viewing even the most sacred subjects. There are habits of thought, forms of speech, modes of presenting ideas, methods of action, adapted to the living, changing minds and characters around us. Much of the best inspiration to the young comes from the unexpressed and unconscious sympathy of contemporary minds, growing up under similar circumstances, acted upon by the same influences, attuned to the same key, and answering spontaneously to each other's wants. I have endeavored to keep up with the religious thought and sentiment of the day, and have had no occasion to complain of any apparent decline of interest, especially on the part of the young. But the time has come. A new connection promises a better success. I need not say how grateful I am to you for all your kindnesses through these many years. Nor need I say how grateful to me are the arrangements that have been made, and how much I shall rejoice in everything that may help you and your new pastor in continuing what has been the great work and hope of my life.

“I have only to look around me to be admonished that my time for at least a partial withdrawal has come. In this county of Norfolk, among all the different denominations, there are, I think, only four active ministers of parishes — three Unitarian

and one Episcopal — who were settled where they now are when I came here, a little more than twenty-five years ago. Great and solemn changes have taken place in almost every home since I came among you. All who were then aged have passed away. Of those who were then as old as I am now, only one is living. I have seen those whom we then looked upon as young growing old, their numbers diminishing from year to year. I have watched the conduct of children in our schools, and followed them from the schools to their various callings, rejoicing in their success, sorrowing with them in their disappointments, but, most of all, watching and praying that they might grow in those higher qualities which bring a dearer satisfaction to the heart, which make them in the highest sense useful and honored members of society, and which can never forsake them. I need not speak here of the joy and gratitude with which I have seen young persons growing into all manly or womanly virtues and graces. I think of them with religious thankfulness, and with inward emotions of love and joy, such as fathers and mothers feel in the well-doing of their children. What greater cause of thankfulness and rejoicing can we have than to see children whom we have consecrated with the waters of a Christian baptism blossoming into boyhood or girlhood in the sweetness and the strength of all trusting affections, and then emerging into a riper manhood or womanhood, with all Christian virtues and graces cherished in their hearts, and showing themselves in their lives?

“An upright man, going forth in his own conscious integrity of character, an example of truthfulness and honor, seeking only what is right, feeling his higher wants, and looking to God for the strength and the inward life which He alone can bestow; a man whose heart and mind have been enlarged by a generous religious culture, by habits of fidelity, of kind and gracious deeds, by inward consecration and prayer; having a soul all alive with love, with reverence, with faith; living as in the presence of an unseen Power, and coming forth from that presence to do the duties of the hour; in the midst of men and evil customs, yet with no spot to stain the heaven-like purity of his thought, — what an example have we here of the great and beneficent law of progression, changing from day to day, and yet more beautiful with every successive change! So a young girl, growing up, and passing through the different stages of life, in the fullness and the charm of womanly maturity, — her affections refined and elevated by holy thoughts, her love of admiration lost in her sense of God’s love, her selfishness melted away in the warmth of her affection for others, doing with each hour the duty which it brings, adorning prosperity with a brighter charm, lighting up the darkest experiences with the serene faith of a soul on which the light of heaven always rests, — she, in her home and her sphere, through all the changes which pass over her, is as true and as beautiful an image of God’s kingdom as we can have on earth.

“Here, in the highest forms that we can imagine,

are types of Christian living ; and every one who is earnestly seeking and striving after what is highest and best may go on, 'changed into the same image,' from one degree of excellence to another here, and 'from glory to glory' hereafter. Far away from the attainment of such an end we may feel ourselves to be. Slow and saddened by the consciousness of many disappointments and failures may we be in our progress towards it. But if we seek it with all our hearts we shall go on towards it, and through all our changing progress God will make everything beautiful in his time. Life will every year grow richer to us in its hopes and its benefactions. Sweeter influences will descend upon us from Heaven. Our intercourse with one another will be more cordial and generous, attended by fewer interruptions and purer satisfactions.

"For twenty-five years I have been laboring, according to my ability, as a minister of Christ, as a neighbor and friend, to do something to establish in your hearts this higher ideal of Christian living, and to aid you in making the heavenly vision a reality in your lives. I cannot say that my success has at all corresponded to my wishes. I cannot feel that, either in my own life or in the life of the community, there has been progress enough heavenward to make it altogether pleasant to dwell on the outward and apparent success of my ministry. Here, as elsewhere, some have fallen away from all apparent regard for the institutions and ordinances of our religion ; some have failed to cultivate their religious faculties, and to cherish in their hearts

the reverence for sacred things, and the faith in things unseen and eternal, which alone can cheer and comfort and sustain them when all other possessions and hopes shall pass away; some have grown worldly and hard and selfish. But there have been many instances of lives evidently expanding in the sunlight of God's love; minds opening like sweet and beautiful flowers in the dews of his grace; hearts unfolding into a diviner loveliness, growing more upright, more thoughtful, more faithful and beautiful, with the progress of the years.

“A quarter of a century ago, — those who were in middle life then are old now. They who were young then are beginning to show marks of age. But there are among them those whose hearts will never grow old, — whose sensibilities to all that is beautiful and holy, or generous and lovely, become more alive with every year that is numbered in their calendar. Their faces are turned heavenward. The light of God's truth and love never shines with a more divine illumination around them than when they are engaged in their common thoughts and labors. Time and change and death can have no power over them, except to help them on in their heavenly course, or to set them free from earthly obstructions, that they may go forth in humility and joy into that world where all the prophecies of our nature are fulfilled, and what is dimly longed for and struggled for here shall come to them as free as the blessed air of heaven.

“Almost a generation of worshipers have passed



from these seats since I came among you. On no one of these would I dare, even in thought, to sit in judgment. But how many true and loving spirits have been refreshed and gladdened by our services here on their way through earth to heaven ! How many faithful and beautiful lives have found strength and comfort here ! The sacred songs, the prayers, the associations of this place, have been very dear to many a pilgrim who is now among the angels of God. Many a time should I have been utterly discouraged as I have looked around and seen what dominion the world was gaining, were it not that I have been cheered by words of encouragement and love spoken to me by dear and saintly ones from the very borders of eternity. I seem to see them now, — the young, leaving behind them, in the homes which they had blessed with the fragrance of their own immortal affections, the old in the serene and holy trust of souls matured and ripened for the kingdom of heaven ; men and women in the fullness and freshness of life, with strong hearts and generous aims, while engaged in enterprises of private benefaction or for the general good cut off by what seemed to us an untimely death. Once they were with us here. Their zeal encouraged us. Their enterprise stimulated us. Their patience added to our powers of endurance. Their faith opened to us visions of a more transcendent loveliness. Their unworldliness rebuked and attracted us. If there were nothing else left but only this cloud of heavenly witnesses, I could not feel that life had been poor and profitless and vain.



“There are hopes which the eye cannot see. There are influences at work which the busy world does not recognize. There is a divinity within and around us which will not leave us helpless or comfortless. As centuries ago among the hills and by the sea of Galilee, so to-day and in the midst of us there is a holy one ready to heal our sicknesses, to raise our dead into a blessed and eternal life, to preach to us a better gospel than the world has ever accepted yet. Oh, when shall we learn to recognize his presence and his power? When shall we learn to give ourselves to him as to the highest joy and hope which the soul of man can receive?

“In these five-and-twenty years since I came among you whole families have passed on into other worlds. We have all changed. But, so far as we have been faithful to our trust, every change has been a blessing. The heavens are peopled now by those who were once our personal friends; and, if our hearts have been kept alive to spiritual things, it is not difficult for us to feel that we live in the midst of heavenly beings. He who lives thus has transferred his allegiance from this to a higher realm. If, by the consecration of ourselves to what is highest and holiest, we live and believe in him who is the resurrection and the life, we shall never die. Death is but the messenger to lead us upward into life. We shall all be changed, but only that this corruptible may put on incorruption. When death approaches us, it turns every mortal thing about us which it touches into ashes,

but only that it may set free the soul, and help it to rise in its spiritual body to its eternal home. We shall all be changed, and then, in the gladsome experience of our hearts, in the light which shines down from higher worlds to illuminate and sanctify to us the changing incidents through which we have passed, we shall see a richer meaning, a more sacred presence, a diviner beauty, in every experience here; and we shall see, as we never could before, how He who maketh everything beautiful in his time has glorified the last and greatest change with his crowning mercy when He lifts us up, redeemed and sanctified by his love, into that higher world, and places us there ‘among his saints in glory everlasting.’ ”

Of his life in Milton Dr. Morison wrote in the brief autobiography which has been several times quoted:—

“ In the autumn of 1845, I resigned my office in New Bedford, and in January, 1846, became the pastor of the First Congregational Parish in Milton, Mass., where I have continued to this day. The society is small. The duties of the place have not been oppressive. The people have been very indulgent. Among them I have found men and women whom it is a great joy and privilege to know as friends. I could ask for no higher or more exciting employment than to do everything in my power for their instruction and improvement. If there has been little to feed or gratify any lower ambition, there has been a great deal to cherish

the best affections. The highest thought that I have been able to reach has always found a hospitable welcome. My one aim in life has been to prove myself in all things a faithful minister of Christ, and, even in the apparently narrow sphere in which my lot has been cast, I have found abundant opportunity for the exercise of all my faculties. I have written and published a commentary on the Gospel of St. Matthew,<sup>1</sup> and had hoped to extend the work so as to include the other evangelists. At different times I have edited the 'Christian Register,' and 'The Religious Magazine' or 'Unitarian Review.' But the work of an editor was never to my taste. The pulpit, the parochial labors, and, above all, the studies, of a Christian minister, have had for me greater attractions than any other office or calling. They have been to me always a sufficient stimulus and reward. When drawn away from them for a season by failing health, it has been an unspeakable happiness to come back to them again."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Disquisitions and Notes on the Gospels: Matthew.* Boston, 1860.

<sup>2</sup> *History of Peterborough*, p. 191.\*

## VI

### SLAVERY

THOUGH, on his settlement at Milton, Mr. Morison entered upon the long, quiet period of his own life, the country was at this time passing into throes of excitement such as it had never experienced before. The agitation of the slavery question was soon to reach its height, and to be followed by the ordeal of civil war. During his Western journey Mr. Morison had seen a little of slavery, and the impressions which it made upon him were briefly noted in his journal. In December, 1843, he had accompanied Robert Swain to Savannah, and had there been present at a slave auction. He always associated his father's troubles in Louisiana with the existence of slavery there. He had the Scotch capacity to abhor those things which he thought wrong, and he exercised this feeling towards slavery. On the other hand, his early association with Judge Smith had given him a respect for law, and few men of his profession have begun under stronger legal influences.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Two prominent lawyers were once speaking of his *Life of Jeremiah Smith*. One said that he thought it was the best life of a lawyer ever written by a layman, to which the other replied that he would not make the qualification.

While in sympathy with their object, he thoroughly disapproved of the methods of the extreme abolitionists, and would hardly allow "The Liberator" in his house.

"The Christian World" of January 27, 1844, contained an address, signed by eighty-five Unitarian ministers of Great Britain, asking their brethren in America to act "in behalf of the unhappy slave." A month later a meeting was held in Boston, at which a committee was appointed to prepare a reply, Mr. Morison being one of this committee. His views were expressed in the following extract from a letter to Rev. A. P. Peabody, chairman of the committee, dated March 2d : —

"We all agree in the sad conviction that slavery in its political influence, more than all other subjects, threatens to upturn the foundation of our government; that, in its moral and religious bearings, it is a grievous wrong to master and slave; and that, as it is in violation of the fundamental principles of Christian duty, it must, if continued beyond the absolute necessity of the case, be attended with consequences the most disastrous. But at the same time it is an evil which has sunk into the heart of society, and is so woven into the whole social organization that, while we all feel that something must be done, our views as to the particular mode of action are perhaps almost as various as



our names. As it respects any political action for the abolition of slavery, except in the District of Columbia, the citizens of the free States have no more right to interfere than the citizens of Great Britain. As a political body each State has the entire control of this matter within itself, and is exceedingly jealous of any interference from without. Our influence, therefore, must be a moral influence, accompanied always by that deep sympathy and Christian kindness which, taking into account all the difficulties of their position, may find its way to the hearts of our brethren at the South. How this may be done most effectually is a question which each of us must consider for himself. We have too sacred a reverence for liberty of thought and action to make particular views in respect to the course to be pursued, or a particular mode of conduct, a test of religious character. Solemn deliberation is required by us all on a subject of so fearful a character as this, and, as we must answer to a higher tribunal than that of man, we must be faithful to our own convictions. At the same time, we must each of us allow to our brethren the same liberty that we cannot in our own case surrender without a crime, and be careful in our judgments lest we also be judged."

These views were subsequently embodied in a letter which was signed by one hundred and thirty ministers and sent to England.

On another occasion, when it was proposed that the American Unitarian Association should take



direct action on the subject of slavery, Mr. Morison objected, and the following draft of a report, prepared by himself for publication, but which does not seem to have been used, shows his views : —

“Mr. Morison moved that the resolutions be laid upon the table. Not that he objected to the views they expressed in respect to slavery ; he believed in them all, and not only believed, but was ready to express his belief at the North and at the South. But he was opposed to any action on the subject by this body, because he considered that any such action must be unfavorable to the cause of freedom, and entirely foreign to the objects for which this Association was formed.

“And, before entering at large upon these reasons, he could not but say that the measures seemed to him very far from being of a magnanimous or courageous character. If the brother who proposed them were himself going to the South, and chose to offer such resolutions that he might have the authority of this body to sustain him in his course, or if on reaching a Southern city he chose to make public proclamation of his anti-slavery views, it might be all very well, as he alone must bear the consequences of his act. Or if those of the Association here present choose to pursue such a course, let them go, and if need be die ; they would at least die for a good object, and there would be something of courage and magnanimity in their conduct. But it did seem a cowardly and unmanly course for us,

four hundred miles from a slave-holding community, out of all danger, to be passing resolutions, the whole burden and danger of which must fall on a few of our brethren, who, with a fidelity and zeal at least equal to ours, and with discouragements, Heaven knows, sufficiently severe, are laboring at the South for the advancement of Christian truth.

“But, beyond this, Mr. Morison believed these resolutions would effectually shut out the only important influence that we could exercise at the South in behalf of freedom. The influence must be principally a social influence, and arise from a free, friendly, and Christian interchange of thought and feeling with our brethren there. There can be at present no public speaking there against slavery. None of our abolitionists from the North dare attempt it. But the moment we pass these resolutions, or any others on the subject which properly express the feelings of this body, we make a public declaration which fixes the suspicion of the South on every member of this body, and so cuts off at once any and all influence that we otherwise might have in the matter.

“By sending with every Unitarian missionary to a slave-holding place a remonstrance against slavery, and thus virtually making a renunciation of slavery, at least in principle, the condition on which they are to receive our aid, we mistake the end for the means. What missionary board ever exacted from the heathen that they should give up their idols, or their respect for them, as the only condition on which they should be permitted to receive

missionaries? or what temperance body, in dealing with an intemperate community, ever made total abstinence on the part of that community the condition on which they should be permitted to have lecturers? We send out missionaries to convert the souls of the heathen, and thereby destroy idolatry. We send out lecturers to touch men's hearts and persuade them to take the pledge. And we send out Unitarian preachers to the South to teach the great doctrines of Christian truth and duty; and if, as we most solemnly believe, slavery is an institution at war with Christian truth and duty, it must, with dueling, drinking, gambling, and every other evil institution or habit, flee from before their presence. The abolition of every unholy and unchristian institution is the end to be accomplished by the diffusion of Christianity, and not a preliminary condition on which alone we will permit the means of extending Christian truth to be employed.

“In the second place, Mr. Morison objected to these and to all general resolutions, not called for by particular circumstances, as foreign to the purpose of this institution. We are the *Unitarian* and not an *Anti-slavery* Association. We meet for the discussion of other subjects. If circumstances should grow out of the regular action of this society bringing the subject before us as a practical question, then it is our duty to consider it so far as relates to the legitimate action of this society. The subject of slavery is one of such absorbing interest and importance that it cannot be

discussed in its broad grounds and relations as the subordinate subject in an association like this. If made a part of our regular discussions, it must from its character become the principal part, to the exclusion of all other subjects, and this Association becomes virtually an anti-slavery association. Are we prepared for this result?

“But it is said that silence speaks in favor of slavery. But is this true? We as an association pass no resolutions on intemperance, but do we therefore lend it our sanction? We pass no resolutions on dueling, or stealing, or lying, but do we therefore sanction them? Worldliness and selfishness are the great and crying sins of the times, existing in our midst, lying at the foundation of slavery and of almost everything that is evil in society. We pass no resolutions on them. And why not? Because, though they must be destroyed when our doctrines are established in the souls of men, yet as distinct objects of action they do not fall in with the purposes of this Association. If we wish to pass resolutions on those subjects we join or establish a temperance or moral-reform society. And so, if we would pass resolutions on slavery, let us, apart from this Association, join or establish an anti-slavery society.

“But the strongest reason why resolutions like those now proposed should not be adopted or even entertained here is, not only that they are foreign to the objects of this Association, but that they are entirely inconsistent with the very principles on which it was established. This Association was

got up in opposition to all authoritative associations, and on what we consider the fundamental principles of the Reformation. The Bible is the only external authority that we recognize; and the ground on which this Association was formed was, that, with that as a guide, every man must be permitted to decide for himself, not only in matters of faith and doctrine, but in matters of duty. We rejected all creeds, and every device by which religious associations, under whatever name, would bind the judgments or consciences of men. Yet, when we adopt these or any other resolutions of a similar character, we adopt an anti-slavery creed, and use all our strength as a public body to bind the consciences of our brethren. I would resist with all my heart and might the very first encroachments of this nature. In claiming the right as a public body to pass these resolutions we claim the right to pass any resolutions on matters of Christian doctrine or Christian duty, and thereby effectually to exclude from the Association those who cannot in conscience lend the influence of their names to articles of doctrine or principles of duty which they cannot approve, or which, it may be, from their very souls they abhor. It has been a matter of surprise to me that they who would stand forth as the peculiar and exclusive advocates of universal freedom should insist on passing resolutions which, however dear to them as principles of private faith and duty, yet cannot be passed by this body, and thus imposed upon its members, without doing all that we as an association can do



to violate the very first principles of religious and moral freedom. It may be said that they only express our opinion ; still it is an opinion which thus comes forth with the sanction and authority of this body, and expels from the body every conscientious man who cannot yield to it his assent, and expels him with all the disgrace that we as an association can inflict, — with the disgrace of entertaining opinions which we have branded as unchristian and untrue. And what more can any religious organization in the land effect ?

“I must therefore most solemnly protest against any resolution which, however innocent in itself, cannot be passed by this body without violating the great — and what we should regard as above all others the precious — principle of moral and religious freedom, on which and for the advancement of which this Association was established. I consider it a question of vital importance, — a question on which, not perhaps the existence, but, what should be dearer far, the very design and purpose of the existence, of this Association depend.”

Mr. Morison had the highest admiration for Daniel Webster. He used to say that he could repeat the whole of the first speech he heard him make ; the speech was little more than a motion for an adjournment, and he felt that the power of these few words more than repaid him for going to the meeting. But when, in his 7th of March speech (1850), Mr. Webster advocated the Fugi-



tive Slave Law, Mr. Morison, at that time editor of "The Christian Register," in a leading editorial expressed himself as follows : —

"On questions of national expediency or constitutional law we should not venture to enter into any discussion with Mr. Webster. We go to him as pupils to a master to learn the political bearing and relations of political measures. But as responsible conductors of a religious press, connected with a most intelligent and influential body of Christians, we must be wholly unfit for our place unless we are competent to speak of the moral character and influence of great public measures. And it is with a keen sensation of sorrow and regret that we look at Mr. Webster's speech from this point of view. We have been educated from childhood to regard him as the great man of the nation. We have been accustomed to find in his speeches expressions of patriotism, and of a burning enthusiasm for liberty, which are strengthened rather than impaired by the qualifications suggested by a broad, far-seeing political wisdom. We have followed him in his public course through all changes of political fortune with a pride and confidence such as we have had in no other man. When his adherence to an unworthy administration brought down upon him the fierce denunciation of his party, we saw in all this an evidence of his independence, his superiority to party discipline, and his devotion to the great interests of the country. If he has sometimes been silent when

we could have wished to hear his voice, we were inclined to think that he knew best the power of silence as well as the power of speech. In the volumes which contain what he has said on the most important public occasions through a period of nearly forty years, there is, it has seemed to us, nothing which can hereafter sully the fame of a sincere and enlightened Christian statesman. He has spoken of the principles of Christianity as the basis of all true legislation; and in the last of his speeches before leaving home he spoke, as no one but he can speak, of the roused moral sentiment of the world, — a power mightier than despotism.

“But in his speech of last week on the great moral question of the age, we miss the decided recognition of its moral character which Mr. Webster’s previous speeches would lead us to expect; and, as if it were purely a matter of political expediency, he even goes so far as to advocate a law which must come directly in conflict with the moral convictions of the great body of the people in the free States. We at the North believe that slavery is morally wrong. We could not, unless for the purpose of setting him free, or under some overpowering necessity, hold a slave without violating our convictions of moral and religious duty. This is the deeply-fixed moral sentiment of the great mass of intelligent and conscientious men throughout the free States. Now it is not right, and no legal enactments can make it right, to aid another in doing that which it is wrong for us to do. If it is wrong for us to lie, or steal, or murder for our own

benefit, it is wrong for us to help another to lie, or steal, or murder for his benefit. Here is a position in morals which can admit of no dispute. If, then, we cannot, without violating our moral convictions, hold slaves ourselves, we cannot, without doing equal violence to our moral convictions, take active measures to assist others to hold them.

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“It is a perilous thing to bring the laws of man into conflict with what the purest and most enlightened members of a community regard as the laws of God. No despotism has ever been able long to survive such an experiment. In a free country the government which shall attempt it will find its laws trampled upon with a degree of moral indignation and horror proportioned to the respect with which they have been accustomed to regard them.

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“But what is to be done? Must we not fulfill the conditions of the Constitution? To this we reply, that we are ready to fulfill them *according to the provisions in the Constitution*. If these provisions are inoperative, it is a misfortune to those for whose benefit they were made, — a misfortune arising out of a state of things which neither of the parties to the agreement contemplated at the time, and which therefore neither party is bound to make up for to the other in order to prove its good faith in the transaction. No fraud has been practiced upon the South. Since the adoption of the Federal Constitution a change of moral feeling in regard to slavery — a change

which we can no more control than we can control the laws of the physical universe — has come over us in common with most enlightened Christian nations; and in consequence of this change the provisions of the Constitution are not sufficient to answer the end for which they were designed. And no other provisions that can be devised will be sufficient. In this particular Mr. Calhoun is right. ‘It is impossible to execute any law of Congress until the people shall coöperate.’ Are we, then, wanting in good faith to the people of the South because, while we allow them to use all the provisions made by the Constitution, they cannot thereby secure their object? If two parties agree not only upon particular ends, but upon the means of securing those ends, and if without their intentional agency great changes in society occur which render those means entirely insufficient so far as relates to the interest of one of the parties, the other party certainly is not in equity responsible for that result, or bound to make it up by sacrifices which had not entered the mind of either party at the time the agreement was made. Each party to every agreement or compact extending through a series of years must run risks of this kind for which the other party is not accountable. As an act of good faith, therefore, we are not bound to go beyond the articles of the Constitution in order to redeem our pledge in this matter.

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 “It is, we repeat, a perilous act so to legislate that the laws of a powerful, intelligent, and moral

people shall be on one side, and their deliberate religious convictions of duty on the other. Nothing can do so much to break down all respect for law, and undermine the authority of government. The statesman who overlooks this fact leaves out of sight a consideration which it is fatal to neglect. We owe allegiance to the Constitution and laws of the State subject to the higher allegiance which we owe to the Constitution and laws of the United States; and we owe allegiance to the constitution and laws of the United States subject to the still higher allegiance which we owe to the laws of God; and to neglect the last of these is to neglect that which must have an authoritative and controlling influence over the whole, and which, above all the rest, is binding upon the conscience of legislators and individuals."

When the bill had become a law, he believed in what the Quakers call "passive resistance," by which, refusing it all countenance and support, the moral forces of society should bring their condemnation to bear upon it and upon those who upheld it. He afterwards wrote: "If the counsels of those who advocated forcible resistance had generally prevailed, the Civil War would have been precipitated upon us here and then in New England, and we would have been the rebels. The weight of the government and the overwhelming Union sentiment of the nation would have crushed



us to atoms, and slavery would have ruled over the life of this people as it never had done before. So far as slavery was concerned, I look back on that heated and trying period of editorial responsibility with great satisfaction."

When, four years later, Anthony Burns was arrested in Boston as a fugitive slave to be taken back to the South, and the Massachusetts militia were called out to hold in check the people who would have rescued him, Mr. Morison preached a sermon which offended more than one member of his parish, but which, after more than forty years, is interesting both as showing the feelings of those troubled times and the character of the man:—

When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations.—Matt. xxv. 31, 32.

"After the events of the past week, there is but one subject possible for us this morning. If those events could be taken up out of the heated emotions of the day into the scene foreshadowed in our text, and made to appear, as they will appear, in the light of that holy presence, it would be the best use that can be made of our morning services. But it is not for one oppressed by human weaknesses, hemmed in by our human ignorance, and open to the passions and excitements of the hour, to undertake here to anticipate the calm decisions of that pure and august tribunal.



“There are times when it is a relief to look up from earth to heaven, to pour out our souls in prayer, or refresh them amid high and holy objects of meditation. In sickness and death, when we are painfully bowed down by a sense of human weakness and mortality, it is something to be permitted to look up to Him who hath neither beginning of days nor end of life, and to still the tumultuous throbbings of our grief by resting on the peaceful bosom of his eternal and unchanging love. So, without apparent cause, there are seasons of depression when the world seems poor and life hardly worth the having, and objects which we once valued lie despised around us, and it seems as if there were nothing here to call out one fresh thought or generous affection. Then it is a relief to look up from the wintry barrenness and desolation around us to the pure skies and shining stars, and to think of the serene abodes and immortal joys that await the weary and the faithful beyond their flaming bounds. We love at such times to think of a world where there is no weariness or pain, no disappointment or injustice, no succession of vain and heartless pursuits, no hollow professions, or clashing of selfish interests. Then we look even to the judgments of Heaven with a sense of consolation and relief.

“So, in national sorrows, when a people are robbed of their dearest privileges by the hand of foreign oppression, and the bravest and noblest of the land are exposed on scaffolds, or buried in prisons, or driven into exile by the cruel and inhuman acts

of foreign power, they can at least turn to the All-merciful One, and, commending to him their righteous cause, take comfort in the thought that He is for them though all the powers of earth and hell may be combined against them. And in seasons of national profligacy, when public affairs seem all to be going wrong, and the national faith and honor, and the future well-being of millions who shall come after us, are compromised by laws enacted from motives of personal ambition, — so long as we do all that we can to resist and prevent these laws in their passage and in their evil consequences, we may look up with a hopeful trust to Him who overrules all human affairs, and who often, by means which we can neither foresee nor devise, confounds the designs of the ungodly. Amid the calamities and sorrows which are brought upon us by unjust and cruel laws, — when the oppressed cry and find no helper, and on the side of the oppressor is power, and even the tribunals of justice become instruments of oppression and the law itself a calamity and a curse, — it is a relief to turn from these human tribunals, where wrongs are enforced, to the pure and righteous judgments of the Almighty, where all unrighteous laws shall be repealed, and ‘the cause that was ill-judged shall be judged over again,’ and lawgivers and judges be called to account, and perfect justice be administered with perfect love.

“And yet there is a feeling at such times that we all are involved in the guilt, as we all to some extent are the instruments of wrong, and must all share

— we and our children — in its consequences. We feel that some terrible calamity has fallen upon us all, and it is not the least of our sorrows that we cannot look up with hopefulness even to God. His justice is arrayed against us. His very mercies are against us, on the side of the helpless and the oppressed. We cannot at such times ask Him to bless our native land in its present acts ; for that would be to ask Him to uphold and enforce laws which are crushing out the dearest hopes of his children. To ask Him to assist and bless us as a nation, at such times, is to ask Him to bless and countenance the heaviest wrongs that government can inflict on the weak and helpless.

“But, as individuals, we may stand apart. Though, in so much of what we most value and look forward to for the security and happiness of our children, or dread as portents of evil to them, we are involved in the common blessing or common calamity, and must stand or fall with the country in which our lot has been cast, yet, in all that relates to our own religious fidelity and sense of personal responsibility, we may stand apart ; we may look on in mournful silence ; we may refuse to lift a hand to enforce what we believe a cruel act of injustice ; we may open our homes and our hearts to the poor, hunted fugitives from oppression ; we may cherish in ourselves, and seek to awaken in others, feelings of bitter sorrow, indignation, and repugnance to acts which ring through the air with a sadder dirge than the tolling bells of a thousand funerals. And when the Saviour of

the world, in the person of one of the least of his brethren, is once more betrayed into the hands of men, and we feel that ‘this is their hour and the power of darkness,’ we may, in the muteness of our despair on the human side, absolve ourselves from all participation in the crime, and look up in lowliness of heart to the great Judge and Arbiter of all.

“Here, for the present at least, there is no hope. A great national crime against one of God’s helpless creatures, like a great moral eclipse, has suddenly darkened the whole atmosphere around us, and peopled the land with its lurid and ill-boding shadows. But it is a relief to look up from darkness and oppression here, to the judgment-seat of Heaven and the holy retributions of eternity. It is a relief and a comfort to think of the coming of the Son of man in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, when he shall sit on the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations. From unjust laws and acts of violence, and streets thronged with armed men to enforce the wrong, and to strengthen the hands of the oppressor and crush his victim, we turn with a sense of relief, and almost of joy, to that pure tribunal before which ‘the mighty men, and every bondman, and every captive,’ shall stand; where no unrighteous laws shall be recognized, but their makers judged and their victims set free; where those who have refused to assist the least of one of Christ’s brethren, in sickness or in prison, shall hear the sentence, ‘Depart, ye cursed;’ and they who have

visited them and ministered unto them in real kindness shall hear the word, ‘Come, ye blessed of my Father.’ ‘Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me.’

“It is an unspeakable comfort and relief to look up from our narrow, imperfect, and unjust tribunals and laws to such a scene as that when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and to meditate on the principles of justice and mercy which enter into his decisions, as he there enforces the great laws of his kingdom.

“The prevalence of the evil makes us indifferent. The number of its victims generalizes and weakens our emotions. And so we grow hardened to its wrongs. But when we take an individual case; when I have heard a slave mother, who had redeemed herself from the land of bondage, speak of her children who were still there, without one harsh or angry word towards him who kept them in what she feared might ruin them body and soul; when I have seen her turn her tearful eyes towards heaven with a look of anguish which no tongue could express, and then speak of death as her only hope in behalf of her children, — speak of her joy if she could only know that her daughter was dead, in the hands of God and not of man, — I have felt, as you also would feel, that slavery has not crushed out the dearest sensibilities and affections of the heart, or its terrible sense of injustice and wrong.

“But I do not wish to dwell on this sorrowful



subject ; though, racked and tortured as our feelings have been during the past week, it is impossible to keep it long from our thoughts.

“How are we to show our allegiance to Christ, that we may be prepared to meet him when he shall come in his glory ? The test which he has here given is one which admits of no doubt. We are to remember, and, so far as lies in our power, to assist the helpless and the wronged. But suppose that human laws forbid us to render such sympathy and aid ? Then — it is no divided empire that Christ would hold over us. There can be no compromises there. His authority is supreme ; and by his law, not the law of the land, shall we be judged hereafter.

“But, when he was born on earth, he was crowded out into a manger, because there was no room for him in the inn. And so it has been ever since. Amid the busy throngs of men, there has been no room for Christ or his religion. The places of business too often have no room for him, and so his claims and words are crowded out. The halls of legislation are full of their own concerns, and there is no room for him or his religion there. The objects of ambition, our social engagements, profligacy and crime among the poor, profligacy and wickedness in high places, oppressive and cruel institutions upheld by cruel and oppressive laws, while we are here in our mortal pilgrimage, leave no room in the caravan or the inn for the Saviour and his claims, and so he is crowded out. But this pilgrimage will soon be ended. Time is but



for a moment. The judgments of eternity will soon press upon us. And where, then, shall be our hopes unless we serve and honor our Master here? In that hour which must come so soon, when human hands and hearts can render us no further aid, and all our earthly hopes and possessions shall drop from us like autumnal leaves, and we must leave our pleasant friends and homes and go alone to stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, would we look hopefully to him because he has declared to us the words of eternal life, and calls to himself them that labor and are heavy-laden? Then let us remember those other words of his, 'I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; sick and in prison, and ye visited me not,' and so bear ourselves in life that their heavy and terrible condemnation may not fall upon us. The excuses by which we soothe our consciences here will be of no avail to us there. Before that tribunal the example of wicked or thoughtless men, the heated passions, or the opinions current among our associates, the laws of society or of nations, will not excuse us, if we have joined the side of unrighteous authority to oppress the poor and the friendless, or to keep down the prisoner and him that was ready to perish. As we hope for the mercy of God here or hereafter, so let us now be kind and merciful to those who need our help. Let not the toils of society so wind themselves about the heart, repressing our genuine and best emotions; let not the cares and contests of the world so harden or benumb our moral sensibilities, or evil institu-

tions and laws so blind and pervert the conscience, — that we shall cease to recognize the supreme authority of the great and primary duties of humanity. Our first allegiance is to God and his laws. To violate or disregard them is treason against the majesty of Heaven. No human institutions or laws can absolve us from that. Not human laws first, but first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

“ A sad thing it is — there is no sadder spectacle under heaven — when the two are arrayed, one against the other, man’s laws lifting their puny strength against the laws of God ; thousands of armed men under the laws of the land surrounding one poor, helpless fugitive, whose only crime has been to seek the liberty which should be dearer to us all than life, unmindful of the compassionate aid due to one so helpless and so wronged, in the face of the most solemn words of Christ and the most sacred laws of God, hurrying him off to hopeless captivity, — it is the saddest spectacle that the sun looks down upon in this world of suffering and of sin. It makes the heart sick. It causes us to tremble for the salvation of our country. It fills us with unspeakable sorrow for all those who take part in these mournful acts. For it is not that one unhappy victim is thus consigned to bondage. This is a small thing. But by this public act the whole authority of the nation is called out through this one man, to strike at the very heart of our common humanity, to overthrow the great and eternal principles of all right, and to set at

naught the laws of God and all the humane precepts and the authority of Christ. It is because of the public sanction which it gives to an inhuman wrong, thus enforced by the authority of law and the whole power of the nation, that this single act jars on our moral and religious sensibilities with a keener pang than a hundred murders perpetrated against law. The very temple of justice is profaned. We feel that there is no longer any place left for freedom. In this one person the rights of every human being throughout the land are violated and set at naught. 'So I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun: and behold the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of the oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter. Wherefore I praised the dead which are already dead more than the living which are yet alive.' And from these scenes of injustice and violence, is it not a relief to look up to the calm and holy judgments of Heaven, administered in perfect love, according to the great laws of humanity and kindness which are enjoined on every follower of Christ?

"These, my brethren, are solemn times. They force solemn thoughts upon us, and call for solemn resolutions. I would lift no hand of violence, and would counsel no one to do it, against the law, or against those who would enforce the law. They who take the sword shall perish by the sword. I look on those who, with weapons of war, would carry out this unjust and inhuman law, with sor-

row, and with silent prayer that God will pity and forgive them. It is a fearful thing, whether under an inhuman law or against it, to assume an attitude which may involve the shedding of human blood. The appetite for blood is inflamed and maddened by that which it feeds upon. Life has many ties that are dear and precious, and I have no disposition to rush on martyrdom. But, sooner than give one look of encouragement to those who would enforce such a law, or withhold from the prisoner any act or expression of kindness and relief which it lies in my power to give, — sooner than that, let this arm fall from its socket, and this poor body be blown into atoms by their murderous implements of death. For I know that my Redeemer liveth; and, in such a cause, I should not fear to stand before him and to see God.

“One moment let us view this subject in its relation to the security of society and to our national government. That which makes obedience to the law of the land a sin in the sight of God, and obedience to God’s law a crime in the judgment of human tribunals, — that which makes even those of us who are most loyal to the government feel with sinking hearts that here is injustice and cruel oppression embodied in a national law, — has, to our human eyes, no bright side. Victory on either side is a sorrowful defeat. The triumph of law is the triumph of injustice. The triumph of right and merey is the triumph of lawless violence. It is all darkness. To disobey the law is to weaken the authority of all laws, and let loose

all the disorganizing elements that are always ready to break out and prey upon society ; to obey it is to set at naught the more solemn obligations which we owe to those divine principles and sanctions which are the only safeguards of society, and without which human governments become instruments of injustice and oppression, and soon lose their hold on the affections, and their authority over the minds, of a people. A sadder alternative could not be presented. Let the scenes of the last week be repeated a few times more, and the sight of American troops in the streets of Boston will be as hateful, and as much associated with the idea of cruelty and oppression, as was the sight of British troops in 1775. Every sentiment of national pride and affection will be mortified and destroyed. It is dangerous for a free people, with a burning sense of wrong rankling in their breasts, to become too familiar with the sight of armed men called out to enforce what they believe to be an act of terrible injustice. If, in these times of intense excitement, when the strongest possible impressions are burnt into the very soul and men become reckless of life, — if, at such times, the flag of our Union, to which all eyes are turned, is unfolded over the place which serves as the prison and the judgment-hall of one whose only crime has been that he was born with the love of liberty, and so fled from bondage ; if the most conspicuous office of our national flag is, not to wave proudly in the forefront of the battle for liberty, but to lead a poor, trembling fugitive back to his captivity ; if it is to be, not an



ensign of freedom thrown gladly to the breeze amid the proud acclamations of those who love to honor it, but hanging heavily over the prison-house of the slave, to seal his doom, and extinguish the last hope of freedom that has dawned upon him, — then it will be time that it should be clothed in mourning, and, with muffled drums, and funeral dirges, and tolling bells, follow the coffin of all true manhood and liberty to their dishonored tomb. But, before that hour shall come, ‘tear the tattered ensign down.’ Trample it in the dust. Let not the flag which has served to kindle the hopes of a great and glorious nation be put to such uses of infamy and shame.

“But I will not, even in this dark hour, indulge in such forebodings. There is a nobler spirit still living and immortal among us. The union of liberty and law for which so many lives have been spent, and which once seemed so firmly established on these Western shores, is not gone. In the words of the great and honored chief who led our armies in those perilous times, when, though feeble and few, we dared to confront the mightiest empire on earth, and march with naked and bleeding feet through wintry snows in defense of human rights, — in the words of that great chief, ‘Inwoven as is the love of liberty with every ligament of your hearts, no recommendation of mine is necessary to fortify or confirm the attachment.’ By that great and honored name, we will cherish it still. Even wicked laws shall not crush it out. Its old fires are not extinguished. Every breeze of popular



commotion, like those which have been created by the aggressions of slavery during the past season, will only fan it into a more intense flame. These laws will be repealed. Its beacon-lights will flame again from every hill-top; and our national government, returning once more to its great office of framing laws to protect the rights and liberties of all, shall reach out its beneficent and protecting care over remote settlements, till the wilderness from sea to sea shall resound with the hum of free industry and enterprise; and the peculiar office of our nation among the nations of the earth shall be, like that of Christ himself, to give liberty to the captive, to break every yoke of the oppressor, and let the oppressed go free. And what a mission will it be! With what emotions of honor and pride shall we go with our national banner to the uttermost parts of the earth! The oppressed everywhere will hail its coming with acclamations of gladness, and follow it as it departs with grateful benedictions. No nation ever set out on a career of glory with such advantages, 'except these bonds.' Let no recreancy on the part of her sons, no miserable entanglements of party ties, or electioneering intrigues, or plausible claims of injustice and established wrong, ever dissolve the allegiance which we owe to her, and by which we are bound to defend her from every act which can tarnish her purity and her honor. Then will our country be, like the good Samaritan among the nations of the earth, — nay, like Christ himself, — the refuge of them that labor and are heavy-laden. When the Son of

man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, in the laws of righteous retribution which follow the conduct of nations, he will recognize her beneficent mission and will bless her. 'I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.' Advancing centuries shall witness our national greatness, peace within our walls, and prosperity within our palaces. And, if the day which comes to nations shall at last come to her, when her bulwarks and her defenses shall be broken down, true to the last, her influence will outlive her existence; and her example will everywhere continue to bring hope to the captive, and to nations struggling for liberty and law, as the light of some distant star continues to shine upon us in all its purity ages after it has itself ceased to exist."

## VII

### THE WAR

THE beginning of the war put Dr. Morison's feelings and his legal duties on the same side, and he entered into the struggle with all the earnestness which was possible in a non-combatant. He early offered to go to the front as chaplain, but he was now fifty-three years old and was never asked to go. He followed closely the whole course of the momentous struggle, and it wore on him in the most trying way. Two sermons may be reproduced here in illustration of his thoughts.

The first was preached on Fast Day, April 4, 1861, after the inauguration of President Lincoln and before the fall of Fort Sumter.

Remember, O Lord, what is come upon us: consider, and behold our reproach.

The crown is fallen from our head: woe unto us that we have sinned.

Turn thou us unto Thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old. — Lamentations v. 1, 16, 21.

“It has been customary on this day of fasting and prayer to confess our sins, personal and national, to seek the divine forgiveness by sincere repentance and earnest efforts at amendment. It

has also been not an unusual thing to dwell on our national condition and prospects more fully than would be suitable in our Sunday services.

“As regards our public affairs, there has been no time within seventy years when apparently there has been such ground for humiliation and distress. It is not merely that one eighth part of the nation has separated from the rest, and put itself in attitude of vehement hostility toward them, but the principles on which the separation is made are such that, if we assent to them, we allow that we have no government left. This grand fabric of government, which for more than seventy years has helped us on in a career of growth such as the world never saw before us, is all a mistake. The great men who framed our Constitution, and the great men who have administered it for more than two generations, have all been acting under an illusion. The power which has made itself felt throughout the world, which has grown stronger as the thrones of monarchs fell, which has extorted from kings a reluctant recognition of its place among the mightiest nations of the earth, has been all a pretense and a delusion. Our government has in fact no power. It has no authority to execute its own laws except when there is no vigorous opposition to them. Any party to a compact may withdraw on its own terms, taking away whatever it can lay its hands upon, in spite of the terms of agreement by which it has solemnly pledged itself to abide. These doctrines, subversive of all popular government, and which can end only in civil

anarchy, or a military despotism which crushes out all human rights, are practically enforced in one part of our country ; and, what is far more alarming to us, they are openly defended or covertly acquiesced in by many persons in almost every part of the land.

“Here is the great, and, if it be not put down, the fatal peril of our day. All the Gulf States — nay, all the slave States — may leave us ; and if we who are left are only sound in our principles we shall, in less than twenty years, be a far more powerful nation than we ever have been yet. In numbers, in wealth, in all the elements of material prosperity, we shall be greater ; and in moral power we shall be without the one source of internal irritation and weakness which is at war not only with the fundamental axioms of a free government, but with the whole spirit and tendency of our modern civilization, — with its literature, its philosophy, its Christian sentiment, and its practical philanthropy.

“But if we accept the doctrines which, originating with Mr. Calhoun thirty years ago, and denounced by all our great statesmen and patriots then, are now largely in favor, and bearing their legitimate fruits in the disruption of this Union, we can only divide and separate till we have become utterly disintegrated, and the noblest edifice ever erected for the security of man and his rights will lie around us a mass of rubbish and of ruin.

“Here is the momentous peril that is pressing upon us now, and which, as it seems to me, some



of our best and most conservative men are virtually helping to advance. A foreign government takes possession of one of the smallest fishing-vessels on the banks of Newfoundland, and the whole power of the nation rouses itself to vindicate the rights of the obscurest of its citizens. But let one of our own States imprison our citizens without law or against the law, or lay its traitorous hands on a national vessel, arsenal, or mint, and we are told that the government has no power to vindicate its rights. Now, if these principles are once recognized and carried out, we not only have no national government, and can have none, but we have no state government, — in short, no county or town government. If these principles are true, the inhabitants of a school district may take possession of a schoolhouse, drive out the teacher, and appropriate the building to their own use ; or those who live near the almshouse may take possession of that and establish themselves, as rightful occupants, within its comfortable quarters, and there will be no lawful authority to dislodge and punish them.

“The peril is one which lies very deep ; but, unless it is removed, the last hope of man for a free government must pass away from the earth.

“Now, what is to be done ? How is the evil to be remedied ? Not by the exercise of military force, unless that sad necessity should be brought upon us in such a way that there is no alternative. War, even civil war, with all its dark and terrible train of evils, is not the greatest calamity that can fall

upon a people. But unless there is a quickening spirit of patriotism pervading the people of the free States, at least as a controlling influence; unless there are consistent and Christian ideas of government at the basis of our institutions, and high sentiments of public duties and of national honor as the leading motive in this whole movement, — the violent exercise of military force would do us no good. It would only add the atrocities of civil war to the elements of confusion and disorder already existing. Such a method of coercion might be justified by the essential ideas which underlie all governments, and which alone make any government possible. It would be justified by the instinct of self-preservation, which belongs to governments as it belongs to individuals, and which is in itself a higher necessity than the literal observance of any conventional article of agreement, and which is to be understood even if it is not expressly mentioned. But then what good can a civil war accomplish unless there are distinct and well-understood ideas in regard to the object which is to be gained by it, and unless it is demanded by the patriotic sentiment and the moral convictions of the people that those ideas shall be carried out? In that case we should engage in it without an object, — with many misgivings, — without those high convictions which alone can nerve the heart of a people to meet the dangers of war and to bear up under its necessary inconveniences and burdens, and its possible disasters and calamities. War is the last dread resort of nations. No man has a right to declare for it

unless he is willing himself to share its burdens and its dangers. No man, I say, has a right to vote for war unless he is so convinced of its necessity that he would feel justified before God in offering himself or his sons to assume the awful responsibility of taking the lives of others or sacrificing their own lives. Until a community feel that such is the necessity of war, they have no right to enter upon it.

“The nation that declares war without this conviction of its political or moral necessity — the citizen who votes for war, or who knowingly and intentionally stirs up the passions of others in order to cause a war, without this conviction of its necessity — is guilty of murder, with all its attendant atrocities and crimes.

“I can conceive of circumstances arising to-day — in some localities, at this very moment, circumstances may exist — which justify such a recourse to arms. If a national vessel or a national fort is attacked, it must of course repel the attack, if it has the ability, or we no longer have any government, and the horrors of universal anarchy — a thousand times worse than the horrors of civil war — are upon us and there is no hope left. Such a collision is not to be lightly provoked. But if it should be forced upon us, the whole patriotic heart of the country should be ready to meet it.

“Still, even if driven into war by such an extremity, and still more if, as I trust will be the case, there should be no war, the only hope of our political and national salvation must be : —

“1. In a higher sentiment of patriotism. We have been so prosperous that we have had little to call out our national feeling. Like a family living on in unbroken prosperity and health, we know not how strong our interest in one another is. Our Revolutionary War united us. Our second war with England did much in many parts of the country to call out the sentiments of national pride and honor. Even the war with Mexico did something in this way, though it was mostly of a sectional character.

“It would have been a blessing to us if this same outrageous act of foreign aggression only could have been involved in a fearful contest with the most powerful nations in the world. It would have cemented us together as a people, and made us forget our private quarrels. But we have been prosperous beyond all former example among nations. We are young. We have not, as most nations have, a common history of centuries, to awaken a national enthusiasm and bind us together by the affecting memories of many generations. We are made up of foreign ingredients, and have not yet had time to be assimilated into one homogeneous nationality.

“These unfavorable influences we must seek to overcome. We must have a higher sense of national honor, and of the devotion and love which we owe to our country, the common mother of us all. We must be ready to make sacrifices. We must cherish the sentiment of reverence for her and her institutions. We must look up to the

flag which she holds over us with feelings second only to those with which we love and worship the Almighty. We must be ready to do what we can ourselves, and pray God in his infinite mercy and power to do what we cannot do, to preserve and defend our native land.

“If our present perils only help to call out this sentiment, to make us feel how much we owe to the mild and benignant government under which we have been born, and how much we should be ready to sacrifice in its behalf, they will accomplish a great and a good work.

“But in order that patriotism may lead to good results in a country like ours, it must be enlightened by just and Christian ideas of government. Our fathers studied the subject. They had wise and consistent theories. How is it now? How is it with our young men? How is it even with those who are to exercise a leading influence in the community?

“These things should be looked into. Then there will be light, and with it higher ideas as well as a warmer sentiment of public duty.

“But, after all, the seat of our disease lies deeper than this. We want:—

“2. Higher views of life—a higher standard of moral and religious rectitude everywhere to act upon the hearts of our people. The Roman historian in the latter days of the republic looked upon it as one of the sure signs of impending ruin, that all things had become venal. Everything, even patriotism and personal honor, had its price.



Money was the god to which everything was ready to bow. Have not we been making mournful progress in this direction? A national prosperity such as no people ever knew before has been overwhelming us and displacing not only the frugal habits and temperate ideas of our people in regard to these things, but lowering the whole ideal of life and subordinating it more and more to the demands of a vulgar ambition for wealth.

“Here is the great sin and peril of our day. This, more than seceding States, is undermining our highest prosperity and degrading our national character. This empire of money-making — the love of it the ruling passion — is what has closed the eyes of our Southern brethren to the evils and enormities of their social system, and driven them into their present desperate measures. This it is — the craving for positions which yield money — that has lowered the tone of our politics and made the whole sphere of party welfare, to such an extent, one vast system of moral corruption. It is this that enters our places of business and exalts the law of pecuniary expediency above the law of moral rectitude. It is this that enters the poor man’s house and fills it with heart-burnings and jealousies against his more prosperous neighbors, and instills into his children’s minds an ambition to be rich, which crushes out their finer sentiments and makes them ready to sacrifice everything else to that one end. And so with that one ignoble idea they are struggling up in life, and, while many fail and fall, one in five hundred perhaps succeeds

at last in gaining his end, and in being, not a man of high and generous aims which make himself and his wealth a humanizing, Christianizing influence and blessing in society, but in being a vulgar, low-minded, selfish, rich man.

“I know that there are better things among us. I know that this mean ambition for wealth, without the attendant graces which alone can make wealth honorable, is not the universal or even the common passion among us. If it were so, our case would indeed be hopeless. For a society based solely on a material prosperity, without the higher instincts and sentiments to bear it up, is a fabric built in the slime of a bottomless bog, which sooner or later must swallow it up. We still have such a thing as mercantile honor; a generous regard for the wants of the suffering; domestic purity, a prolific source of all the virtues; family ties formed and cherished without regard to mercenary considerations. We have pure names among us yet, bright examples in public and private life, among the rich and the poor, and especially in the great middle classes which constitute the moral as well as the physical strength and hope of the nation. We must never forget these encouraging symptoms and omens of good.

“Still, in the growing habits of luxurious and extravagant living, and the disposition to estimate everything by the money it will bring in the market, there is a tendency downward, which is felt especially in everything connected with our public affairs. If this tendency is allowed to go on un-

checked, it is not difficult to see what must be the end. Let us deplore it with tears and penitence. Let us labor to resist and turn it back.

“ But what can *we* do in regard to a matter of such momentous importance? What are we that we should have any influence on the condition of this great nation and the administration of its government? Each one of us can act on one citizen; reform one if he is now wrong; bring one under the law of God; make one patriot with clear ideas of public duty, with a high ideal of life and with earnest efforts to bring his life into harmonious relations with its ideal.

“ We can each one of us do this in our own case, and thus each one of us will be a centre of healthful and beneficent influence. Our better thoughts and motives will act on those around us. The public spirit which animates us will infuse itself into our children. Instead of steeping their young natures in sordid and selfish sentiments, we shall animate and stimulate them with purer ideas of private honor and public duty. They will breathe a more bracing atmosphere. The spirit will be contagious. The neighborhood in which each one of us lives will catch our tone of feeling, and carry it on till the impulses which have gone forth from these separate centres touch one another and the whole community feels a new and quickening power. If we in this town will only do this, if others like us will do the same in neighboring towns, the whole country, the whole State, and at length the whole nation, will be redeemed and

saved. It is in our own private purity, and the virtues which enrich and adorn our homes and our little communities, that we are to seek for that which alone can secure our public safety and advance our national honor. The change which is to regenerate the nation must begin in our own hearts. The crown indeed is fallen from our head; woe unto us that we have sinned. Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old."

Three weeks later, when the first gun had been fired and the contest had begun, he wrote: —

"The mighty impulse that sways this people, and makes men of every class and condition in society ready to be offered on the altar of their country, is an earnest of a better order of things. What we have been taught by our grandparents to regard as one of the most sublime movements in history is showing itself as a present fact in the midst of us. The spirit of '76 is revived. Rich men are giving their money. Fathers, too old to go themselves, are sending their young men into the face of extreme and imminent peril. Mothers, and sisters, and wives bestow on them their blessing, but do not ask them to stay. 'Go,' they say, 'and God be with you.' These young men who have gone from among us, and with whom the deadly work has already begun, are not the victims of a misguided enthusiasm or a momentary caprice. As we have looked into their countenances, we have been able to see no mark of levity

or of intemperate excitement, but symptoms of a profound sensibility, and of a fixed and solemn purpose. Character ripens fast under the pressure of these great dramatic and historic events. Years of life are crowded into days. The boy of yesterday has ripened into the man of to-day. The strippling looks into the face of one dearer to him than life, and then, with stifling and perhaps speechless emotions, without one wavering thought, goes, a matured and thoughtful man, to search out and confront the danger whose shadow is round us all, and even here darkening the very sunlight, as with some strange apprehension of alarm. It is through sacrifices like these, and through men like these, that every country worth living in has purchased and maintained its inheritance of civil and religious freedom.

. . . . .  
“Is it said that our religion is one of peace? So it is, and we would bow in reverence before the great Prince of peace; but we must remember that even he came not to send peace into the world, but a sword. In the mysterious counsels of Almighty wisdom the highest and holiest ends of civil society are to be wrought out in deadly conflict, and with such weapons as human hands can wield. And through these conflicts and wars, in all ages of the world, the noblest exemplars of Christian character have been formed, and nowhere have more earnest and holy supplications to Almighty God been raised than on the eve of battle.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Christian Register*, April 27, 1861.



The second sermon was delivered three years later, when the great contest was at the full height of its terrible earnestness. For many years Mr. John Reed was sexton of the Milton church. He had a son, James Sewall Reed, who went to California at the age of seventeen, one of the Argonauts of 1849. The boy developed into a man in the rough life of early days in California. In 1862 a company of men was enlisted in California, who came East together, and became Company A of the Second Massachusetts Cavalry; James Sewall Reed came with them as the captain of "the California Hundred." On the anniversary of Washington's birthday, the 22d of February, 1864, while acting as major in command of a battalion, Captain Reed was killed near Drainsville, Va. On the 13th of March, 1864, Dr. Morison preached the following sermon in the Milton church:—

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. — John xv. 13.

"These words were spoken by our Saviour the evening before his crucifixion, and refer to his own death,—that great event which, in connection with his teachings and his acts, has wrought such a change in the moral convictions, the spiritual insight, and the religious life of the world. The whole plane of our being has been lifted up and enlarged by the sentiment here expressed, illustrated, and confirmed, as it was so speedily by his

death, and his resurrection from the dead. The end for which we are born has thus been projected into higher realms. This world has been enriched and glorified by the light which streams upon it from the world of spiritual life and joy in which he lives, and which he has brought into more evident and vital relations with us. Because he lives, we shall live also. As we live and believe in him, we are made partakers of his life, and already become members of that kingdom which rises over us, which enfolds us in its embrace, and carries up into its wide and holy realm the souls of his followers, and the work which seems unfinished and in vain because of their premature departure from the earth.

“Here is one of the decisive tests of discipleship indicated by Jesus. He who so lives amid the higher sentiments and affections of our religion as to subordinate everything else to them is recognized as belonging to him. Thus it is that he who loses his life for his sake shall find it. That is, he who, at the command of higher obligations, disregards this visible, apparent, earthly life, enters into the unseen, substantial, eternal life, and, so far, is lifted up into his wider sphere of pure, unselfish living.

“Here is a real ground of distinction between those who are followers of Christ and those who are not. If you find a man to whom property or life is more sacred than duty, you may be sure that he has not entered into the spirit of Jesus. If you meet a man who scoffs at the finer sentiments of our nature, and, in respect to the greatest sacrifices

which are made to them, asks, 'Why all this waste?' you may be sure that he is unable to know anything of the ideas which Jesus came to declare, or the life which he came to impart. Here, more than in any ecclesiastical or theological opinions or professions, is the best test of our allegiance to Christ. He who resists temptation to wrong-doing, and in his life keeps himself unspotted from the world; he who preserves the sweetness of his affections, and, delighting to do what he can for the comfort and happiness of others, forgets himself in his devotion to them; he who esteems the cause of righteousness more sacred than that of self-interest, who considers the integrity and life of his country as of more importance than any private end, and who, so believing, gives his life in attestation of his belief, — he so far enters into the spirit of our Lord, and approves himself his follower and disciple.

“ ‘Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.’ He who spoke these words died in order that the world might be drawn towards him, and, through faith in him, be made partakers of his divine and eternal life. His immediate followers, with no country except the spiritual community in which they were united, were called often to attest their fidelity to him by dying as witnesses to his truth; and the more they died, the more their numbers multiplied and their cause prevailed. When prosperity and ease and life became dearer to them than their faith in Christ and their fidelity to him, then their

cause languished and their religion became inoperative and dead.

“Those times of martyrdom, in the forms in which it then existed, have passed away. But there are other trials which furnish the same test of character, and in which our fidelity, even unto death, is as essential to the rectitude of our own lives and the advancement of God’s kingdom on the earth.

“The highest conception we can form of a Christian commonwealth is that of a great spiritual community, the unseen Church of Christ, in which his ransomed ones of all ages and lands are gathered together, and which, in one unbroken communion, reaches down from heaven to earth, and draws into its embrace, from every kindred and nation and tongue, those who fear God and work righteousness.

“This is the highest idea that we can form of a Christian commonwealth. Next to this, and, in its highest state, beyond anything that the world has yet known, coincident with it, is the idea of a Christian people united together in one great commonwealth ; protected by wise and equal laws ; owing allegiance to the same government ; looking to the national flag as the emblem of liberty and justice, of union and strength, the ensign of a nation ready to put forth all its energies to defend the rights of the weakest citizen against the most powerful empire on the earth ; guarding all its children with equal care ; opening its schools to rich and poor alike ; protecting churches and hos-

pitals, and all benign institutions and charities; raising highways through the wilderness for the houseless; preparing homesteads for the homeless; and, like the great Benefactor of our race, sending out its gracious invitations into distant lands, and inviting people of every rank and condition, but especially the poor, the down-trodden, and the oppressed, to come, without money and without price, to share with us the privileges that we and our children enjoy. Next to the idea of the universal Church of Christ, reaching from earth to heaven through all ages and all lands, is this idea of a Christian commonwealth reaching from ocean to ocean, — from the lakes and forests of the North almost to the tropics; administering its laws with an authority so gentle that we were hardly conscious of its pressure; while its benefactions visited us like the dews and the providence of God, — so silently, that we forgot to be thankful for them. No such commonwealth as this of ours ever before existed, — no one so free, and yet so secure; so little interfering with individual rights, and yet so universally extending its protection and its gifts to all. We began our life as a people here in the wilderness. We grew up by the neglect of the nation which had authority over us. Our institutions, our government, and our laws were left to form themselves around us, like our bodies, by no arbitrary rules, but almost as a natural growth from the vital forces which were at work within. The old governments and nations of the earth, which at first despised or ignored us, at length



began to look upon us with admiration and fear. We were rapidly preparing, in the regular progress of our advancement, to take our place as the foremost among them all; and, except for one cruel injustice, allowed by our government, and binding its chains on four millions of helpless people, its influence was more and more felt throughout the world in favor of freedom and justice, and against the old despotisms which had so long oppressed the hearts and hopes of men. This, my friends, was the commonwealth in which we were born, under whose laws, and in whose institutions, we were nurtured. Lived there ever a people on the face of the earth who had so much reason to honor and reverence and sustain the government which threw its protecting arms and laws around them; whose blessings were so many, and its burdens so light? If foreign nations had leagued themselves together to overthrow and destroy it, should we not have esteemed it a privilege and a joy to lay down our lives in its defense? If traitors at home should league themselves together, and, after secretly plotting against it for more than a quarter of a century, should aim their murderous weapons at the bosom from which their life and ours alike was drawn, though they were a thousand times our brethren, could we stand by and see them murder the common mother of us all? 'Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.' And here traitors, with murderous hands and thoughts, are trying to cut in pieces and destroy the dear and venerated form of her who, as

our common mother, has pressed us all to her bosom, and who, with bleeding countenance and an expression of infinite sorrow, looks imploringly to us for our support. By all that is most sacred in life, by our reverence for Christ and the righteous laws which he would have us obey, by what we owe to our children's children, she calls upon us to save her from this act of treachery and murder ; to save our national honor and life ; to uphold through her the supremacy of wise and equal laws ; to leave her with added purity, so as to awaken a deeper love and reverence among those who shall come after us. Shall we not obey her call, and lay down our lives if need be, freely, in defense of her, who, next to our Saviour, is our greatest benefactor and friend ?

“This is the appeal which ‘our own, our native land,’ has been making to her children for the last three years. And not in vain. No call of a suffering parent was ever more bravely or more faithfully and reverently obeyed. From every walk of life, and from every post of duty, her sons have come forth, and thus we have been enabled to see, as never before, what specimens of large and generous manhood had grown up under her care. From our common schools and our colleges, from poor men's homes and rich men's homes, young men, moved by a common enthusiasm, have gone forth, side by side, to confront a common danger, and to preserve the integrity and life of the nation. Examples have been given of a heroism as beautiful, of a gentleness as winning, of a generosity as

noble, of a fidelity as sacred, and a reliance on God as devout and unfaltering, as any that are to be found in the pages of history or of poetry. I cannot think of them, whether living or dead, otherwise than with gratitude and honor. Their names will be kept among us as watchwords to kindle the patriotism of the young in all coming generations, and to keep alive their reverence for 'whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are lovely and of good report.' While they live, let our prayers call down the protection and benediction of Heaven upon them, and, when they die, let their names and memory be cherished as the dearest and most sacred of our treasures.

"I wish to speak this morning of two men, in widely different spheres of activity, equally devoted to the same cause, and equally, I think, laying down their lives for their country within the last few weeks. One of them was born and passed his early years within the sight of this church. This quiet scene of rural loveliness surrounding the home of his childhood; these trees, standing here as God's sentinels to protect and guard his house of worship; these roads and fields; this house of prayer, and the Sunday-school connected with it, —all, doubtless, had their influence in forming his character and preparing him for the responsible duties that were to be laid upon him. He was thirteen years old when I came here in January, 1846. Once in that winter, by reason of a most violent storm, I preached to an audience of five persons, and he was one of the five. He had no

advantages of education which any boy among us may not have. He went to the town school, and then, for a short time, was a student in the academy under the instruction of Mr. Ezra Ripley, — a man of high purposes, of rare purity, integrity, and modesty, who, at the commencement of this war, left an extensive and increasing practice at the bar, and carried with him into the military service the brave and persistent resolution, the keen sense of right, and the instinctive hatred of wrong, for which he had been distinguished in civil life. After more than two years of faithful and efficient service, he died near Vicksburg, Miss., a few weeks after the capture of that city. The ability with which he acted, and the value of the services which he rendered, were very inadequately represented by the position which he held as lieutenant in the Twenty-ninth Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteers.

“At the age of seventeen, JAMES SEWALL REED went to California, where, beginning as a day-laborer in some mechanical employment, he worked his way up to a post of responsibility and trust in a large mercantile house, whose confidence and respect he always afterwards retained. Few among us know the temptations to which our young men were then exposed in that distant land, freed as they were from all the restraints of home, and from the legal and moral safeguards which are furnished by the laws and habits of a well-ordered community. It is the testimony of those who knew him best through his whole experience there that he

never took advantage of the disordered state of society to relax the severity of his principles or to give up anything of his moral purity and ingenuousness. At the age of twenty-two, he was the captain of a military company, and exercised a great and salutary influence over his men. He spent one season in Lower California, and the next on Frazer's River, where he was brought into contact with the Indians, whose admiration and confidence he gained by his remarkable courage and his honesty, and whose grateful and devoted services he secured by his generosity and kindness.

“At length there came a time when the government of California had become so corrupt that the laws were perverted, and courts of justice turned into instruments of violence and wrong by those whose business it was to administer them. Neither life nor property was respected, and some of the best citizens, who had made themselves obnoxious to wicked and lawless rulers, were shot dead, either in the streets or at their places of business. The courts of justice offered no redress, but sheltered the murderers from harm. It was one of those rare and fearful occasions which are not likely ever to occur in a settled community, under our popular form of government, when the people are justified in taking the law into their own hands, and securing the ends of justice by a summary and illegal process. Here our friend, as a military officer, by his judgment, his perfect fearlessness, and the ascendancy which he had over his men, rendered



important services to the cause of good government, and secured for himself, on a larger scale than before, a name and a place in the community, as one who might be relied upon in any great and perilous emergency.

“When the Civil War broke out, he wished to offer himself as a volunteer. But the loyalty of California was at that time so doubtful, and the ties which bound her to the Union were so new and untried, that it seemed as if loyal citizens were more needed, and might be more useful to the government, there than here. But he got out his military books and studied them with continuous and earnest attention; and when the fervor of our first enthusiasm here in the East had abated, and it was beginning to be difficult to get the men that were needed, he, with a friend,<sup>1</sup> who like himself has been in some measure connected with this religious society, determined to raise a company of cavalry. Within less than a week, five hundred men offered themselves as volunteers. But they could get permission to enlist only one hundred. With these picked men he came on from California about fifteen months ago, and attached himself to the Second Regiment of Massachusetts Cavalry. The expectations which he and they inspired have not been disappointed. He had, in a remarkable degree, the qualities which endear an officer to his men, and command at once their confidence and their obedience. He has had a trying service, and has always been found equal to its require-

<sup>1</sup> Captain Archibald M'Kendry.

ments. He might have escaped its hardships. On those distant shores of the Pacific, he might have remained at home without any imputation upon his patriotism or his honor. He was a man of warm domestic affections. He loved his home, with its comforts and its endearments. But the voice of his country, stabbed, and threatened with destruction, by the treachery and violence of her own sons, calling on him to give his services and his life in her defense, was a voice that he could not resist. He has fallen in the ripeness of his early manhood. No stain rests on the fair fame which he has bravely and honorably won. The more closely and confidentially I have inquired into his private history from those who knew him best and in his most secret walks, the more unhesitating and unequivocal has been the testimony to the purity and the integrity of his life. No braver man lived, and he was as gentle as he was brave. A lady who came from California with him, and whose sympathies were strongly with the South, said she knew he was a brave man, because he was so gentle, so devoted, and so patient in his attentions to a little, helpless child. And so it usually is. The finest qualities of gentleness and modesty, of love and reverence, are those which entwine themselves most closely and tenderly around the strongest. In the field or the camp, when others were tired out or discouraged, he was always cheerful, and dispelled their despondency by the contagion of his own light-hearted and mirthful spirit. Letters from the camp say that it is dull and sad

there now, without him. But he has fallen in the performance of a great and solemn duty. He pledged himself to a sacred cause, and he has fulfilled his pledge. These trees and hills will be clothed with a fresher green ; these homes will be more secure and better worth living in ; these schools will be filled with a freer and more docile succession of pupils ; these churches will be consecrated by a holier worship, a purer morality, and a loftier faith ; a nobler race will walk our streets for generations yet to come, when we are dead and long centuries hence, — because of the life which he and others like him have lived, and the death which they have died. If any of you should stand weeping by what seems to you their untimely graves, remember the words inscribed on the tomb at Thermopylæ, — ‘Go tell them at Lacedæmon that we lie here in obedience to her laws.’ Or, better than that, with more of the Christian spirit in which so many of our young men have entered this great and terrible conflict, write upon their tombs, or at least associate with their memory, the words, forever consecrated as the words of Jesus, and sanctified to us by his death : ‘Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.’

“The day after our friend, with many tears and blessings, was laid in his grave, the news came from San Francisco that his minister, the Rev. THOMAS STARR KING, had suddenly died that morning. There was but one man in the United States who had greater power than he to draw together vast assemblies of men, enchain them by his generous

thoughts, and charge them with his own enthusiasm. When this wicked war was forced upon us by the assault on Fort Sumter, and it was doubtful which side the new State on the Pacific might join, Mr. King gave himself to his country with a purpose as brave and as solemn as if he had thrown himself upon the most desperate battle-field. He traversed the State. He lectured, he preached, he prayed. He electrified great masses of men with his own self-forgetting patriotism. He caused the sentiment of national honor and enthusiasm to thrill through them, and bind them to their country with a warm and unfaltering devotion. There was in him no jealousy, no narrow thought of self, to dim the clearness of his eye; no ugly ambition to gnaw at his heart-strings, and interfere with his kindly judgments, or prompt to ill-natured and ungenerous remarks upon the character and motives of others. An intimate friend of his, who preached about him last Sunday, with singular felicity of adaptation entitled his sermon 'The Unspotted Life.' He had what no bad man ever has, — a laugh which rung as clear and mirthful as the tones of a Christmas bell. When he went from us, he bore with him the light-heartedness, the elasticity, and the joyousness of a boy. But I learn that one who saw him a short time ago said that he looked then like an old man. The labors and the responsibilities of a lifetime, crowded with such intensity into those few brief months, had told upon him as the work of years, and probably left him without strength to bear up under a disease which other-

wise might have had no fatal power over him. I have little doubt that, like hundreds of other loyal men at their various posts of duty in civil life, he died 'a blessed martyr' to his country as truly as if he had been slain upon the battle-field.

"The last Sunday that Captain Reed and his 'California Hundred' spent in San Francisco, they attended Mr. King's church. His concluding words, which I read from a copy written in his own clear hand as a parting memorial to his friend Captain Reed, were these: 'God bless you, brother Americans, for your readiness, for your zeal, for your pure offering of devotedness, which to-day add force as well as illustration to the pleadings of the gospel with our hearts! You are not "weary" of the call and the strain of patriotism. There are those at the East who are. They wear no wounds or scars. They have not exposed their lives. . . . And you, in these same hours, *seek the opportunity* of pledging strength and skill, and blood and breath, to our country's integrity and honor. Heaven hear our prayers for you, and cover you with its benediction! . . . May the flash of your blades, if you are called into battle, be the dawn of a better age for your country! . . . Go, brethren; do your tremendous duty with dedicated hearts, in the fear of God, which roots out all other fear; in allegiance to Christ; with the New Testament very near your hand, and its appeals very sweet to your souls! "Be not weary with well-doing," though your marches be long and your hope of speedy success denied. In due time you shall reap if you faint



not ; and, if those you leave at home be not cowards and traitors both, you shall reap though you bleed, though you be maimed, though you die ; you shall reap in your country's redemption and renewal, in the honor that will invest your names in future years, in your reward in the better world.

“ These, my friends, are great words of exhortation and of promise. And shall they not be fulfilled ? Both he who spoke them, and the leader of those to whom they were spoken, have laid down their lives in attestation of their truth, and have entered into their reward. It remains for us who yet live to follow them by consecrating ourselves anew to the cause for which they died, and by carrying on, in whatever sphere of activity we can, the work which they have left unfinished. It was well that our friend who died in battle for us should be buried with every demonstration of love and honor, and that his name should be held in everlasting remembrance by those who wish well to their country ; and when our brother on the shore of a distant ocean, amid peaceful pursuits, felt almost as suddenly at his post of duty, it was well that places of business should be closed and flags at half-mast, and a whole community sorrowing as under a great and common bereavement in the home of his adoption, and that here words of tender and reverent commemoration should be uttered. But we shall praise them best, we shall most truly honor their name and their memory, when we do as they have done, and in thought and word, in heart and deed, give ourselves to the work for which

they lived and died. To us, as to them, our Saviour's words apply, — 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.' "

## VIII

### LAST YEARS IN MILTON

ON Thursday, March 2, 1871, Mr. Francis T. Washburn was ordained as associate pastor in the Milton church. Twenty-five years of close pastoral relations had made the will of the pastor and of the parish one, and Dr. Morison selected his own colleague. At the ordination, the senior pastor gave the address to the people, which, spoken by a minister to the people of his own parish, was necessarily based on his own experience, and is reproduced here:—

“With fitting and affecting services we have set apart this young man as a minister of the Gospel of Christ to this ancient church and parish. We would welcome him to this sacred charge. We would also welcome him to this community as one who, in choosing his calling, has shown his desire to give his mind and heart and life to advance not his own personal ends, but the highest interests of society. We would receive him into our homes as a friend whom we shall be glad to see always, and especially in the great epochs and emergencies of life. We receive him among us in the hope and assurance that he will grow into the heart of

this community, and become every year more and more an influence for good to us all. We receive him as a man of culture and refinement, who may help to create around us a finer social atmosphere. We receive him as a scholar, whose intelligence may make itself felt not only in our schools, but everywhere, and especially with the young, in quickening their love of intellectual improvement, and their desire for the advantages of a higher education. We welcome him as a citizen, who, by his enlarged ideas growing constantly more enlightened, by his thoughtful and Christian acts, and by his daily walk in the midst of this people, may, with a gradually increasing power, join himself to all other helpful agencies in lifting us up into a grander and richer civilization.

“ In all these ways his interests are your interests. His success is to be your success. His failure will be a loss and a failure to every one of us. He is your agent, doing your work, and in looking to you for aid, and asking you to assist him by your time, your counsel, or your money, he will not be asking a favor for himself, but asking you to help on your own work by helping him to do it more effectually. It is not the lack of personal kindness that disappoints and disheartens ministers. I have often been oppressed and humbled by personal favors which have only made me feel how little I was doing to merit them. That which we need and long for most of all is to have earnest men and women to act with us in whatever may promote the Christian well-being of a parish, — willing laborers

in the church and in the Sunday-school, to make the offices of our religion alive and beautiful. Here is what we need most of all, — not yours, but you; and the want of this is what depresses and discourages many a young man who has gone into his profession with all the enthusiasm of his nature.

“If the truths, the duties, the motives which your minister holds up to you are anything, they are the most momentous themes which can be presented to human beings. There is nothing serious in mortality compared with them. Do not, then, allow any light considerations to push aside his claims to a hearing, and to show him, by actions stronger than words, how lightly you esteem his ministrations. I speak not of the chill which is thus sent into his heart, but of its influence on you. Amid the rush and cares of life, we all of us need to be reminded of higher concerns. We need to be instructed in them. We need to be persuaded to take them into our hearts, that they may enrich and ennoble us by their sublime hopes, and make life a more gracious and holy thing to us. In inviting here a man of intelligence, improved by a generous and varied culture, with solemn religious purposes, that he may employ his time and strength in leading us upward into a higher and nobler life, we pledge ourselves to give him an opportunity to do his work. We need his help and he needs ours, — our personal attention, our counsel, our kindly interest, not so much in him as in his work.

“While we receive him into our homes and our



confidence, that he may sympathize with us and we with him in common matters, let us also appreciate his highest labors and aspirations. When he strives to hold up to himself and us a grander ideal of what human beings should do and be in their relations to God and to one another, let us not push his appeal aside by saying, even silently to ourselves, that this is only a young man's dream. The young man's dream of to-day is the foreshadowing of what his life and his character are to be hereafter. The young man's visions in this generation are to be in their fulfillment the glory of the age that shall succeed. I have lived long enough to see ideas, which were denounced by our most prudent and commanding intellects as the impracticable dreams of youth, hailed as the salvation of our country in its darkest hours, and made a part of the organic law of the land. Woe to the people whose young men see no visions of ideal realms, greatness, and beauty to draw them upward into higher thought and life! The young man's most daring hopes and visions in this world should be an augury and foreshadowing of the great and joyful realities which may appeal to our highest faculties here, and meet us in a grander experience hereafter. There is an inspiration of the heart which in its sublime anticipations goes beyond all the teachings of our worldly prudence. Let us listen, then, with respect, I would almost say with reverence, to a young man of pure life and sober thought who is giving himself to the highest concerns of our being. Let us be slow to condemn, as

dreams of what is unattainable, the views and aspirations by which he would turn us towards a better life and a holier kingdom, first on earth and then in heaven. Let him feel that there are before him souls carried upwards with him, as they listen reverently to the loftiest hopes and thoughts that he can utter. Then, in his private meditations and studies, he will be encouraged by the assurance that the very highest and greatest and best conceptions that are possible to him are not too high or great or good for us. He will not be tempted to lower his standard of Christian effort, and debase his own soul and life by preaching down to the comprehension of his people.

“Many a minister has been starved in his mind and his religious affections because his people gave no welcome to his best thoughts. A fairer world than is lighted up by any earthly sun must shine before us. A truer Christian life than we see around us here to-day; visions of a diviner splendor descending to earth from heaven, and reflected back here from souls consecrated and alive to whatever is pure and lovely and divine,—these are the images by which the Christian minister is to raise himself, and draw you upward, into a broader and holier experience. In these things let him have your sympathy. Hold him up to the highest capabilities of his nature, by your generous appreciation of the best that he can do. Even if you cannot believe so ardently as he does, and though he may seem to you a great way off in his visions of ideal excellence, still let him feel that you desire and

long for this higher kingdom of God, and that you are ready with him to spend and be spent in your labors to advance its influence among men. In our alliance with the great spiritual forces of the universe pressing on to this end, all other considerations vanish away; and we, ministers and people, are left in the Eternal Presence with whatever of the diviner love and harmony and beauty we have taken up into our life."

The relation between the two ministers was like that of father and son, and of the pleasantest character to both.

Dr. Morison was appointed a lecturer in the Divinity School of Harvard University for the year 1871-72. He delivered a course of lectures on the Pauline Epistles. After his death a minister, who was one of his students then, wrote in "The Christian Register" of these lectures:—

"They were certainly among the most valued lectures I received there; and their value, while not wanting in the letter, was more prevailingly in the spirit. I remember once remarking to a fellow-student, 'The lecturer shows the apostle better than the lecture.' I doubt if since then I have unfolded a text from the Pauline writings, or seriously taken thought of the apostle, without the consciousness of some side-light suggestion gained in those lecture hours,—suggestion not written in the manuscript, not spoken, but conveyed. At the close of the brief course I was aware that only an introduction

to the great career had been given me; but the interior Paul, as I ever since have known him, far beyond any thought of the lecturer, had been shown me. I have often thought of this experience, and sought to explain it; and all I could ever say was that the teacher reflected the apostle as a less complete moral nature could not have done. And in his preaching it was much the same. He used to treat of every-day themes with every-day illustrations, with no effort at all to be novel or profound or eloquent; yet his sermons were not every-day sermons. Simple and even homely, they were suffused with his even-balanced faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, charity. They were ethical. They were spiritual. They corrected, cheered, comforted, warmed, vivified. I have listened to preachers of stronger presence and mightier word, but I have never listened to one who gave me a clearer sense of the largeness and harmony of divine relations. Moral ultraness or one-sidedness was as markedly absent from his sermon as from himself, and with his faith and love and moral grace it was irradiated always."

In January, 1873, Mr. Washburn was married to a lady whom Dr. Morison had long esteemed; they resided temporarily in the house which still belongs to and is occupied by the family of Henry Ware, Jr., being Dr. Morison's next neighbors. The arrangement which had begun so happily and auspiciously was not destined to continue. On the

29th of December, 1873, Mr. Washburn died; the old man outlived the young man more than twenty years. The relations which existed between the two ministers are best described in the words of Rev. T. J. Munford:—

“His relations to his senior colleague were so cordial and satisfactory that they filled the whole neighborhood with the fragrance of affection. When we saw them, each seeking not his own but the other’s welfare, we said to ourselves, ‘Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!’ This exquisite spectacle has done much to remove a great doubt of the modern ministry, in which both young and old clergymen have so often confessed themselves incapable of the generous forbearance and the filial and fraternal love required to prevent rivalry and discord between colleagues. In Milton, if nowhere else, could be found a young man looking with unfeigned satisfaction upon every token of reverence and gratitude toward his senior, and an old man stimulating confidence and hope towards his junior, as if his daily life were a cheerful sermon from the text, ‘He must increase, but I must decrease.’ The sorrow of few fathers for the death of their own sons is deeper than that of Dr. Morison, who finds the entire weight of pastoral responsibility unexpectedly returning, because of the departure of the youthful comrade so worthy of his trust and love.

“While we cannot question the Divine wisdom



or love, we confess that it is uncommonly hard to be immediately resigned to the loss of one so likely to render important services to the world, as well as to be the joy of his own home. But his brief career was not unblessed. To not a few minds he has been a rare minister of beauty, love, and truth, showing us an exalted manhood, and drawing us nearer to everything divine. We shall seldom hear the sweet beatitude, 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God,' without thinking fondly and tenderly of him."<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Morison was again left as sole pastor of the Milton church. After a vigorous youth followed by an invalid manhood, he had entered upon a period of vigorous old age which his friends are always glad to think of. In no period of his ministry did he enjoy his work better, or feel more capable of his duties, than during this year and a half.

Of the sermons which Dr. Morison prepared during this later period, one which was preached on eight different occasions, the first being in Milton, January 26, 1873, and the last in Peterborough, August 1, 1886, is reproduced here : —

Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. — Matthew v. 17.

"What we want most of all is something to dignify and ennoble our common life. No man is

<sup>1</sup> *Christian Register*, January 3, 1874.

satisfied with the deeds and events of to-day as a finality. Not in itself or for itself alone, but as a step towards something higher, as the forerunner and prophecy of something yet to come, do we accept the life of the present hour. However pleasant or sad, however easy or hard, our daily lot, however extended or circumscribed it may be in its immediate relations and effects, we feel all the while that something more is needed to fill out the purpose of our being, and bring the apparent insufficiencies and discords of our daily experience into harmony with one another and with our own hearts. This can be accomplished only by bringing ourselves and our surroundings into living connection with something higher than ourselves, *i. e.* with the Infinite mind. Then, by the voluntary surrender of ourselves to the supreme Will and Law, we may be taken up into the benignant order and harmony of the universe. Our imperfections and shortcomings are supplied from the fullness of Him who is all in all. As we enter into the wonderful order and harmony of the divine plan, surrendering ourselves as willing agents of God in carrying forward his vast and beneficent designs, our littleness is lost, our insufficiency disappears, we are hid with Christ in God, and, becoming ourselves co-workers with him, we are made one with him and partakers also of what is divine. Each obedient soldier shares in the strength of the great army to which he belongs, and is animated and guided by the mind of its leader.

“ But this train of thought would soon carry us

beyond our depth, — into speculations too vast for our comprehension. The teachings of Jesus, on the other hand, instead of leading us away into a vague mysticism, or into speculations beyond our reach, come home to our hearts and connect themselves directly with our daily thought and experience, and nowhere more than in every part of the Sermon on the Mount, where he speaks of having come, not to destroy, but to fulfill.

“The insufficiency of what we now have and are, to every one who feels it, may be a prophecy of something greater and better; *e. g.*, I pluck a flower from its stalk, admire its beauty for a little while, and then, when it begins to wilt, throw it away. To me it is only a flower of the field, — one among the many thousand wonderful but perishing products of nature. Jesus looks upon it, and, seeing what we have seen, fills out our imperfect conception of it, and makes it at once a medium of communication between us and the creative mind and love of God; no longer a lonely, helpless, dying thing, blossoming for an hour, standing up in its own little momentary life and then perishing forever, but a medium through which the creative love of God is revealing itself, clothing it with a glory and beauty greater than royal magnificence, and appealing to us through its unobtrusive and unconscious loveliness, that we also should have faith in him.

“Thus everything that falls under the eye of Jesus is connected with the mind of God, and the laws and workings of his unseen spiritual kingdom.

The partial, limited idea which it would otherwise convey is filled out by his recognition of this higher and more vital fact.

“Wonderful indeed was this power in Jesus of *filling out*, or supplementing, what others saw with the higher thought which had revealed itself in its fullness only to him. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted, because in sorrowing for what they have lost here they may turn to God and find in Him consolation, comfort, an inward peace, a divine joy, which He alone can bestow. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Always the loving, unseen presence and kingdom of God come in to fill up the fatal void which would otherwise be found in every soul, and in every ideal of human conduct and human happiness.

“We regard with pain the apparent inequalities of life. We lament that so few opportunities are given us for great actions. We look with admiration and almost with envy to men who have had the privilege of distinguishing themselves by extraordinary achievements. We think that, if *we* only could have such opportunities, it would be an immense advantage to us. If, *e. g.*, we only had it in our power to give great sums of money, what works of beneficence we would do! For all who cherish such thoughts Jesus would withdraw the veil which hides the most important agencies connected with our lot. And, lo! we also, not less than the greatest general or monarch, have our

magnificent opportunities. The poor widow with her two mites — it was all the living that she had — he who gives but a cup of cold water to one of God's little ones in the spirit of Christ — is by the righteous judgments of Heaven counted worthy of everlasting rewards. *We* see only the small and apparently insignificant *act*, but *He* sees it as it is in all its surroundings and consequences. *He fills out* our imperfect idea by showing with what divine agencies it is connected, what heavenly powers attend us in the act, and what heavenly rewards follow us when it is accomplished. Thus considered, no righteous act is insignificant; no faithful life is obscure; no struggling of the soul upward is unobserved or unaided. We are not alone. The highest laws of the universe are working with us. The angels of heaven are watching over us and helping us. The heart and the mind of God are for us. As our mortal strength fails and our lower desires and ambitions disappoint us, and in utter destitution and helplessness we turn our thoughts upward and ask for mercy and help, the divine compassion is never far off or slow to meet us, and the life and love of God are, like the air we breathe, always ready to flow in and warm and revive our weary spirits.

“He who has revealed to us these holy agencies and influences; who makes the bare places of our earthly experience alive with such visions of divine love and sympathy and help; he who thus shows how the powers of Heaven wait upon us even here in our earthly labors and exposures, and calls on



us to lift up our eyes and look upon the fields which in the light of these higher disclosures of divine truth are white already to harvest, — he surely came, not to destroy, but to fulfill, *filling out* as he does the poverty of our thought and our lives with such holy and inspiring revelations of God's nearness to us and his love.

“Our mortal senses fence us in and prevent our seeing beyond. We allow ourselves to become prisoners to this mortal life, which seems to us as if it were all the life that we can have any knowledge of. But Jesus *fills out* this narrow idea by revealing to us the spiritual and eternal life which is so closely connected with it.

“This is the office of Christ to the soul of man. Entering so deeply, purging away everything that is impure or wrong, and yet so tenderly calling out and fostering every true and delicate affection; coming to us with principles so uncompromising and severe, reaching into the inmost recesses of our being, and yet coming not to destroy but to fulfill; not to break even the bruised reed; not to quench even the smoking flax; not to destroy the smallest virtue which even in its lowest efforts gives some indication of the law of Heaven and of every great achievement; not to quench even the feeblest hope, which though enveloped in smoke and darkness is still a prophecy of good struggling upward towards its fulfillment in some better and more satisfying experience, — so Christ addresses himself to each one of us. Every faculty of our nature, by its appropriate exercise in Christian

living, he would train, educate, refine, and strengthen, till God's purpose in our creation begins to be fulfilled in us. He lays his consecrating hand upon us even in our common labors, and sets us apart for the highest end and fulfillment of our being. He reaches down into the inward soul of man, and, quickening it with his own divine love, makes that the controlling power within us, and thus exalts and sanctifies our work.

"Thus, in every direction, the life and thought of Jesus would lead us to a truer comprehension and fulfillment of the great purposes of life.

"He reveals to us what is wanting in order to restore our disordered natures, and to fill out and harmonize our imperfect and discordant faculties.

"The religion of Jesus comes as a quickening power to the soul, awakening, fostering, strengthening, and filling out all our best faculties. False systems of philosophy and false religions come not to fulfill, but to destroy. Cruel theologies, representing God as arbitrary, merciless, and unjust, strike a deadly blow at what is generous and pure and noble in man. These moral absurdities are swept away by Jesus in the light of doctrines which touch the heart, enlighten the understanding, enlarge our spiritual perceptions, and lead to a grander fulfillment of what a human being should be.

"Here is the hold which Jesus has had on the world, and which he is to have more and more as the real character of his life and mission is understood, filling out what is wanting in us. His words

have often been perverted. His doctrines have been mixed up with monstrous errors. But he came into the world to set us free from sin by filling out before us the law of perfect holiness. He came to enlighten our minds by filling out our imperfect ideas of God and man. He came to breathe into us his quickening spirit so as to fill out all our faculties by calling them all into healthful and harmonious activity. He came to our spiritual natures as the sun to the material world. He came not to destroy or suspend the laws of God, but to unfold them to us in their higher relations, and thus lead us upward into a freer and diviner life. He comes not as a power antagonistic to nature, but in harmony with all its workings, redeeming nature from the thralldom of ignorance and sin, that all its forces may act as beneficent agencies in the nurture and training of man as the child of God.

“There are those who fear that the influence of Christ is passing away. I have no fear of that. False interpretations, which men have put upon the words of Jesus, are passing away, and, to those who believe in them as Christian truth, his religion seems to be passing away with them. Clouds which obscure the heavens pass away. Doctrines which have wrongfully gained shelter and support under his great and holy name are passing away, and in the transition they may for a time take with them something of the love and reverence which are due to him. But every superstition which science and the advancing intelligence of the world

tear from the altar opens the way for us to behold in a clearer light the simplicity and majesty of the religion and the character of Jesus. Every unnatural form which has been cherished as a charm or device to save the soul from some evil being, as it melts away in the higher light that is dawning, will reveal to us in more harmonious and grander proportions the mind, the heart, and the life of Jesus. As the superstitious obstructions which have been placed in the way of our approach to him are one after another removed, and we are allowed to come to him and commune with him as he is, the fairest, the truest, the greatest among the sons of man, we shall find in him that which fulfills all that we have sought after in our holiest moments, in our deepest longings, in our sense of weakness and of sin, in our passionate yearnings for deliverance, and in our loftiest visions of holiness and love and heaven.

“Without his fullness, revealing us to ourselves, we are narrow, imperfect, feeble, sinful; with it, we may have all our faculties quickened and pressing on towards the fulfillment of our holiest wants. Towards this unfolding and filling out of our inward powers we are advancing as we live and believe in him. We go on through different stages of being; our views are renewed and expanded as we advance. Those we now hold may at some time be wholly inadequate. New germs of life and better views are evolving through forms and experiences which pass away. Outward relations are dissolved that inward and purely spiritual relations

may gain new vitality and power. The old home may pass away, but the heart which clung to it once lives more truly and joyfully now in the life which it first cherished there. Friends who no longer meet us in our daily walks live in our affections, and draw us upward into a richer and holier fellowship. Frail forms which we once watched over with such tender, loving solieitude are resolved into dust; but our dear ones who animated those forms are now each one as a loving presenee with us, refining the atmosphere we breathe, and filling out our lives with sweeter and holier influences.

“Every change is but a step in our advance heavenward. Death is but the act of evolving out of this into a higher form of life. And everywhere, as we live and believe in Christ, that which destroys is only preparing the way for a further progress, that God’s beneficent designs may be more entirely filled out and perfected in us.”

On the 14th of August, 1875, Dr. Morison sailed with his wife and daughter on the steamer *Atlas* from Boston for Liverpool. They were gone about a year, returning on the steamer *China*, which reached Boston on Saturday, September 2, 1876. About one half of the time was spent in Italy, principally in Rome. The journey was a quiet one, of which there is comparatively little to tell. At Oxford Dr. Morison attended a Gaudy dinner of the fellows and governing body of University College, which he enjoyed greatly. In December they



reached Rome. The following extracts are from letters to his oldest son : —

“ December 19, 1875.

“ If we had been told thirty-three years ago that on December 19, 1875, we should be in Rome writing to the child who was then just opening his eyes to the light of this world, we should have thought the prophecy a very improbable one. Yet here we are in this city, richer in art and more imposing in its historical associations than any other city in the world, and our thoughts have been more with you than with what lies around us.

“ Mary and I went this afternoon to St. Peter’s Church, the greatest single work of man in matter — so great that, like Niagara, it cannot be taken in at once, but we must grow up to it by long-continued investigation. The worship that was going on in it while we were there seemed to me as much out of place as the worship of the old Roman priests and flamens would be in a Christian temple.”

“ January 28.

“ The works of art here are very much as I expected they would be. It is a great pleasure to see them, and I think I have learned a good deal from them. They show us what conceptions of Christianity were formed by men of the highest genius, and some of them men of the most devout lives, three or four centuries ago. They revolve

round a narrower circle than I had supposed. Yet the two greatest of all, Michael Angelo and Raphael, like Dante three centuries before, seem to have recognized the relationship between all great prophetic souls, and between all genuine systems of culture and worship. The Sibyls and Venus and Psyche have their place with them, and are separated by no insuperable bounds from the Hebrew prophets and Christian apostles. Indeed, the Roman Catholic Church has been too ready to adopt, not the essential truths alone which should be everywhere, but the Pagan forms which limit and oppress the truth. Old Pagan Rome, as a ceremonial system, — flamens, vestal fires, Pontifex Maximus, festal days, apotheoses of human beings, and the rest, — has been adopted by the Church, and has subordinated to itself the sublime truths of our religion. It is a spectacular worship that we find in the churches, while in the administration of the Church we see something of the marvelous power and skill with which the old Roman government subdued and ruled the nations of the world.”

It was while in Rome that he prepared the autobiography from which brief quotations have been made, the remainder of which is properly given here : —

“ In 1870 I asked for a colleague, that I might be able to complete my work on the Gospels. But other duties providentially put upon me filled up

my time. After nearly three years of faithful and intelligent labor in his profession, my dear friend and associate, Francis Tucker Washburn, whose short ministry had revealed to me rare qualities of mind and heart, was taken from us, and with a sense of bereavement and loss I again took up the work which had fallen from his hands. I never engaged in my profession with a deeper sense of personal responsibility, or entered with a more living interest or a keener sense of enjoyment into the great and solemn scenes which it presents. But I have reached an age when such a strain upon the faculties cannot long be continued with safety. I have therefore again asked to be relieved from my parish duties, and, as the only effectual way of accomplishing this, I am now spending a year in Europe.

“My life has been marked by few events of any special interest. I have shrunk from prominent positions, and have been very happy in the secluded labors of my profession, in the means of usefulness which it has given, in the literary studies and pursuits which are closely connected with it, and in the intimate and lasting friendships which it has helped me to form with some of the best people in the world. I hope to still live among the people with whom I have lived, giving and receiving such services as lie within our reach to smooth the pathway of life, and enable us to look forward with a stronger faith and a more fitting preparation for what lies beyond. With every new year I have had a richer experience of God's goodness and of

his universal care; and it would indicate no small degree of intellectual and moral obtuseness, as well as ingratitude, if I had any fears of what is to come. I am not without hope that I may yet prepare a small work on the study of the Gospels better than anything I have yet done. Most of it is in my mind, the result of many years of thought and study. It is very pleasant to think of the occupation which it may give, and thus to indulge the desire, perhaps more than the hope, to be still of some service to my fellow-men. All my studies and all my experience go to strengthen my faith in the substantial truthfulness of the Gospel narrative, and in the unspeakable value of the life and the truth which are revealed in them.

“I have had many disappointments. But, as I look back, the predominant feeling in my mind is one of thankfulness. My life has been full of satisfactions and enjoyment. I have not attained to heights which I had once hoped to reach in intellectual or spiritual culture. But in many ways life has been a rich and beneficent gift, especially in my home, which has had its trials and shadows; but no heart-rending grief has ever entered it. My children, two sons and a daughter, and my wife, have been spared thus far, so that I close this brief outline with devout gratitude and praise.”<sup>1</sup>

Of this autobiography he wrote from Munich on the 4th of June:—

“I felt very much straitened in writing the auto-

<sup>1</sup> *History of Peterborough*, p. 192\*.

biography. But some time I hope to write for my children a minute account of my early life, the events which had the greatest influence on my mind and character, and the persons to whom I owe the greatest debt of gratitude. Almost all of these were omitted in my dry, statistical account, the only account which seemed to me proper for such a place. If I had had time, I should have been glad to contribute a few more pictorial sketches of some of the Peterborough people, — good men and women, of whom no memorial will exist twenty years hence. But the old Peterborough race is scattered abroad. The descendants of those who made the place what it was when I first knew it are no longer there.”

Unfortunately, the more minute account was never written.

Among his early Peterborough friends were two brothers, James and William H. Smith, the sons of John Smith, an older brother of the judge. In 1833 they had moved to St. Louis and engaged in business there. A report of the failing health of the older brother brought the following suggestive words from Dr. Morison : —

“ RIMINI, May 7, 1876.

“ I am sorry to hear from you so unfavorable an account of Mr. James Smith’s health. I suppose that he has been, in his very modest way, one of the most useful men in St. Louis. We are having



a poor type of rich men, who grow rich by sharp practices, with no intellectual or social culture, with vulgar tastes, purse-proud, with little sense of moral obligation or responsibility. James Smith had had small advantages of education, but a sublime sense of religious duty which gave dignity, refinement, and enlargement to his whole nature. The more such men we have the better. Vulgarity of mind and manners, for twenty years and more, seems to have been gaining the ascendancy in business, in politics, and in the professions. A vulgar plutocracy is the highest power recognized in our large cities. A vulgar coarseness of manners and want of dignity in personal bearing have struck me painfully in Washington. Grantism is vulgarity. At our ministerial conferences I miss the high culture and modest refinement and elevation of mind that used to give such an air of respectability to our profession. Our . . . have a sort of power not to be despised, but the high scholarship and breeding of men like Drs. Lunt, and Lamson, and Frothingham, and Walker were also a power in their way."

The last place that he visited was Londonderry, from which his ancestors came. He made this visit alone, leaving his wife and daughter in England, and of it wrote as follows : —

"LONDONDERRY, August 11, 1876.

. . . . .  
"This town rises pleasantly and rather steeply from the river, and on one side at least, within half

a mile, there are hills which entirely overlook it. The old wall is standing. I walked round on the top of the wall this morning, a short walk of hardly more than a mile. Within this narrow compass the neighboring people had been driven by a merciless enemy, and for eight months they endured a siege from an army, at times, of not less than twenty thousand soldiers, bearing every kind of hardship and exposure — famine and danger — with a fortitude and courage such as has seldom been known. Macaulay's account of the siege is one of the finest things he ever wrote. From the wall I looked down the river two miles to the point where the boom was stretched across to prevent all access by water.

“The town in its present state is rather disappointing. There are no relics of the siege, except guns and a cannon-ball, — no collections or descriptions that amount to anything, — no persons to whom I could go for information respecting the old inhabitants. Indeed, two hundred years sweep away every memorial of the existence of simple people such as we are descended from. If I should spend a month here, I do not think I could find any trace of any one of our ancestral families who left here less than one hundred and sixty years ago. So I shall leave the place for the Giant's Causeway this afternoon, and go on to Belfast to-morrow, probably going by boat to-morrow night so as to reach Glasgow on Sunday morning at eight o'clock. I really feel as if I were much more at home, and in the home of our ancestors, in Scot-

land than here. The outlines of the two countries are not unlike, and both remind me very much of New England. The visit which I made with you to my mother's birthplace in Windham — a part of the old New Hampshire Londonderry — was far more interesting and satisfactory to me than my visit here. But twenty years hence there will be nobody living who could tell you anything about the Hopkinses and Reids who used to live there. Our record on earth lasts but a little while. It is well to have another and better record which cannot pass away."

During Dr. Morison's absence in Europe, Rev. Frederick Frothingham had been settled as associate pastor of the church in Milton. On his arrival in Boston, Dr. Morison went to Peterborough, where he spent a month, and then to Milton, where he lived through the winter. Mrs. Morison's lungs were delicate, and, it being important for her to escape the harsh New England climate, she spent the spring in the South. While in Rome Dr. Morison had written as follows : —

"You speak of our selling our house and leaving Milton. I have not time to say much about it now. Milton has been for thirty years our home. The best part of my life has been spent there. Most of those who have been dearest to us in Milton and elsewhere are dead. We have there a house endeared to us by many precious experiences.

We look out on fields and hills which welcome us with grateful memories and associations. There are many homes there which are glad to see us, and which it is a great pleasure for us to visit. Our original friends will soon all be gone. And so shall we. We are too old to create a new home which will be to us what this has been and is now."

During this winter, however, he decided that it was best to change his residence, and with the summer of 1877 his life in Milton came to an end.

## IX

### OLD AGE

IN the summer of 1877 Dr. Morison sold his place in Milton and bought the house No. 26 Marlborough Street, Boston, which was henceforth to be his winter home.

Ten years before, his brother James, on returning from California, had bought a farm known as the "Uncle Sam Morison" place in Peterborough. On it was a good old house built by Samuel Morison, a younger brother of Dr. Morison's grandfather.<sup>1</sup> It was on this farm that Dr. Morison had performed his last day's work of farm labor; he did it during an Exeter vacation, and received half a dollar for the day's work. Soon after the purchase the brother decided not to occupy the place, and Dr. Morison and his oldest son united in buying it from him, the title being taken in the name of the son. The son repaired and put in order the

<sup>1</sup> Samuel Morison married his double cousin Elizabeth Smith. They had six children, — one son, who died at the age of seven, and five daughters, three of whom lived to be old women; one died in infancy and another at seventeen. Not one of the daughters ever heard a sound.



old house in 1876 and the following years, and by subsequent purchases very much increased the size of the original farm. The first month after Dr. Morison's return from Europe was spent in this old house, and on his leaving Milton this old Peterborough farm became his residence for nearly half the year.

Three houses of the old New England farmhouse type, two stories high with the chimney in the middle, were built in Peterborough in three successive years, the oldest being Deacon Robert Morison's house, built in 1791, in which Dr. Morison was born. These three houses now passed into the same family. Dr. Morison's next oldest brother, Horace, had purchased his grandfather's house in 1852. Nathaniel Holmes Morison, the next brother, bought in 1857 the other house, built by John White in 1792. Horace Morison had died in 1870, but Nathaniel was in the habit of spending his summers regularly at Peterborough, and while he was there the two brothers met almost every day.

On moving from Milton to Boston, Dr. Morison at first became a citizen of Boston, but he cared more for his native town than for the great city, and in 1883 he transferred his citizenship to Peterborough. He was a citizen of Peterborough from his birth till his settlement in New Bedford in 1838, and

from 1883 to his death, a little less than half his life.

The anticipations which he had expressed in his letter from Rome, of being too old to create a new home, proved groundless. During the latter years of his life in Milton, a large number of his parishioners, including many of those whose friendship he valued most, were really residents of Boston who spent but a portion of the year in his town; these people he found in Boston. There were many more of his old associates, both in his own profession and out of it, in the city than in the smaller town. From the day he moved to Boston he found himself in the midst of his best friends, and so it continued as long as he lived.

In 1880 he was chosen a member of the Wednesday Evening Century Club, an organization more than one hundred years old, consisting of four ministers, four lawyers, four physicians, and a limited number of business men, who met weekly at the houses of the members. He enjoyed these meetings exceedingly, and kept up his active attendance till 1891, when he resigned and was at once chosen an honorary member. He attended a meeting of this club as late as February, 1896.

His household consisted of himself, his wife, and his daughter. His son Robert, his only married child, who had been settled in Meadville, Penn-

sylvania, resigned his pastorate there in 1878, after which time he occupied a house in Peterborough, near his father, during the summer, and in 1885 moved to Cambridge, where he was less than an hour away from his father's house in Boston.

In the spring of 1885, Dr. Morison delivered a course of lectures <sup>1</sup> at the Meadville Theological School. The following brief notice is taken from a Meadville newspaper : —

“ Dr. J. H. Morison closed his course of lectures yesterday afternoon with a very reverent and beautiful presentation of some of the ‘ Ideal Elements in the Teachings of Jesus.’ This series of discourses has been full of thought, deep religious insight, and sweet inspiration to a more living faith and a more extensive view of the ideal significance of life, using ‘ ideal ’ now to mean the highest and truest conception of life : such an ideal life was the life of the man Jesus Christ, to whom we may all look for strength and inspiration. No one who has listened to these lectures can help having his horizon of life enlarged, and his vision of the life which now is, made more clear.

“ At the close of the lecture Dr. Morison made a few appropriate remarks of farewell and goodwill, mingling in it some very sound advice out of his own rich experience.”

Dr. Morison always retained his interest in the

<sup>1</sup> These lectures formed the basis of a book which he published in 1885.

Phillips Exeter Academy, and as long as he was able to do it he was in the habit of attending one or two of the terminal examinations every year. The venerable Dr. Soule died on the 28th of May, 1879. Dr. Abbot and Dr. Soule together held the principalship of the Academy eighty-five years, each being there a full half century; both were Dr. Morison's teachers; Dr. Soule was the teacher of both his sons. Dr. Morison was invited to preach a commemorative sermon on the 8th of June in the Second Congregational Church (Orthodox) in Exeter, the church in the Academy yard. A few extracts are taken from this sermon: —

“ I think that our English ancestors, and their successors in this country also, were slow to recognize what ought to be the leading purpose of education. In the Gospels, the word διδάσκαλος (teacher) occurs forty-eight times, and yet in our English version we find it rendered by the word *teacher* only twice, and by the word *master* forty-six times.

“ He was a very distinguished teacher. He entered into what was already a great office, and left it greater than he found it. No mercenary motive was ever mixed up with its sacred duties, to degrade or vitiate his work. He loved it with his whole heart. He taught with singular precision and discrimination, and in such a way as to stimu-

late the mind and call its faculties into play. He taught by his word and with his intellect, but, more effectively and to a higher purpose, by that pervasive, life-giving influence which, like the spirit of God, proceeds from a quickening, beneficent, commanding personality. In his access to the mind of God were the 'hidings' of a power which made him what he was, and what no man can be of himself alone,—enabling him to train his boys, not only for places of usefulness and trust and honor on earth, but that their names might be written in the book of life. Thus he became a co-worker with God, taught by Him as a lowly disciple of Jesus, and dispensing to others what he learned.

“ So do all our best instructors teach what they have learned from God. And so may we always be able to say to Him, ‘ All thy children shall be taught of the Lord ; and great shall be the peace of thy children.’ ”

The Phillips Exeter Academy was incorporated in 1781, but the school was not opened till 1783. It celebrated its centennial in 1883, and Dr. Morison was the chaplain of the day. From this time on, whenever he attended an examination he acted as chaplain, until he came to be looked on as the venerable chaplain of the Academy.

When he first moved to Boston, he was in the habit of going to Milton very often, as he said, “ to see the people.” These visits gradually became less frequent, but he always kept up his interest in the



place. He remained senior pastor of the parish, Mr. Frothingham being the active minister, till the spring of 1885, when he formally resigned, so as to leave the parish free to call another active minister and allow Mr. Frothingham to remain as senior pastor. On the acceptance of his resignation the following engrossed document was sent to him by the Parish Committee : —

“At a parish meeting held April 27, 1885, it was voted to accept your resignation as senior pastor of the First Congregational Parish, Milton.

“The ‘Parish Committee’ were instructed to convey to you an expression of the love and respect of the society toward you.

“In attempting to obey the direction of the society, we are unable to find words or phrases adequate to fully express the sentiments of affectionate regard which are the growth of your pastoral connection with this people for nearly forty years.

“Of those who had reached middle life when you came to us, most have passed away.

“Those who were then children have long since arrived at maturity and taken their places in the working forces of society, and through all these changes you have shared the joys and sorrows of your people ; and even in these later years, when so much of the ministerial work devolved upon your assistant, your appearance in the pulpit was an event hailed with the greatest pleasure by all.

“The separation from this society, which is the

consequence of your resignation, is but a form; there can be no real separation: the ties are deeper and stronger than any votes can affect, and so long as you live the hearts of this people will turn to you as their beloved pastor; and in their behalf we express the earnest desire that in the remaining years of your life you may enjoy every blessing that can contribute to your happiness."

On the 23d of June, Mr. Roderick Stebbins was ordained as pastor of the First Congregational Church in Milton. On the following Sunday Dr. Morison preached in the Milton church a sermon which is appropriately given here:—

Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you. — 2 Corinthians xiii. 11.

"There are times when words of benediction and thanksgiving alone can satisfy us. Our sense of love and gratitude to those around us is meagre and insufficient till it allies itself with the love of God, and calls down his blessing on all who are dear to us, and on every human being. There are times when we seem to be standing on a higher plane of Christian experience, when our ordinary cares and solitudes fall from us, and common incidents and events become instinct and alive with deeper meanings. At such times our minds and hearts are peculiarly open to all that is tender and uplifting in our relations with one another, and the light of God's love and truth, shining upon them

with new effulgence, transfigures them before us, and endows them with a divine expression.

“At such times we feel anew the prophetic character of life, and of all that belongs to it. Our friendly greetings become benedictions, because of the love of God which is breathing itself through them. We talk on common topics. We express our kindly interest in one another. And all the while the light of higher worlds encompasses us. We feel that our love and kind wishes are enfolded in the love of God, and permeated by his quickening spirit, under the impulse of these emotions. And, in the light of the higher science which is evolved from such experiences, everything becomes suggestive of something higher than itself.

“Life, in all its departments, is to us, in our grandest moments, not a fulfillment, not a completed fact, but an intimation, a germ, a prophecy, of something better. The intellect, conceiving so much and realizing so little, like the seashell with its low mysterious tones tells us of the boundless ocean of intelligence to which it belongs. Our affections, awakening to consciousness here in dreams of happiness which all the beauty and felicity of this world cannot satisfy, make the dearest and happiest of our earthly relations not so much the fulfillment as the prophecy of a purer, sweeter, diviner union. Our moral natures, trained here to a sense of justice and to some imperfect comprehension of the grander duties imposed upon us by our increasing love to God and man, unfold to us, as the necessary complement of our moral being,

visions of a higher administration of justice tempered with mercy, of a more perfectly ordered and more universally beneficent interchange of commodities between man and man. The finer sense of justice cultivated by our Christian training, and nowhere more effectually than in the competitions and partnerships of business, not only prompts to a more scrupulous fidelity here, but points upward to a more perfect law and sphere. Our spiritual faculties, in their most intense moments, catching some flashings of light from holier worlds, bow themselves in adoration and humility before the infinite and eternal Presence.

“Thus everything here, to our awakened minds, is suggestive of something higher than itself. This outward world, majestic and beautiful as it is, tells of a higher beauty. Our social relations, in our homes and neighborhoods and friendships, happy as they are, tell of a richer, deeper, holier joy. Our human life, the more richly endowed and the more faithful it is, turns all the more earnestly, ‘in sure and certain hope,’ towards a truer and better life. The religion of Jesus, strengthening this hope, purifying the affections, educating the conscience, quickening our religious consciousness, and holding up the promise of a world in which they may all have their fulfillment, would keep alive in us these prophetic instincts, and show us how they may be trained and cherished here and satisfied hereafter.

“If we could only so live as to bring our daily thoughts and conduct into harmony with these loftier instincts and affections, every department of

life would become a fore-court or preparatory school to the kingdom of heaven. But this lower world presses hard upon us. Our necessary cares and labors sometimes tyrannize over us. We are bowed down beneath our burdens, and find it hard to look up. The very training which was intended to call out our better faculties sometimes benumbs or crushes them. We are content to live on a lower plane. And, while we are there, the higher experiences of which I have spoken are a mystery or a blank to us. We cannot quite believe in them. We do not know the wonderful reach of which our human faculties are capable, or the power that lies latent within us waiting to be born into a higher life.

“It is to feed the grand, prophetic instincts of our nature, and to furnish the ideas and incentives which connect men with God, that Jesus came into the world, and established here his church. It is the office of that church to furnish ideas and motives which may help men upward in every stage of their being. Where there is nothing higher for the most advanced minds to look up to, no higher ideas of perfection to draw them upward, no new benedictions waiting to welcome them into a holier light or a profounder peace, there the church is wanting in its ministrations. It is more likely, however, that they who think themselves advanced beyond its teachings find them insufficient because they are themselves wanting in fidelity to its simplest and plainest precepts. The principal solicitude and care of a church should be for the weak



and the erring. The great law of life there as elsewhere must make itself felt in the services we render. A perfect Christian organization is one in which provision is made to meet the spiritual wants of all classes and conditions of men; where higher truths and higher incentives to holiness are opening themselves to the highest minds; where the more advanced, by word and example, and the subtle inspiration of a pure and earnest spirit, are helping on those who otherwise might lag behind. To the most advanced I would say, 'Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect,' and, as a means of attaining to this perfection, do what you can to help the weak.

"In thinking of this church, my anxiety is not for the strong, except that they should labor more earnestly to awaken an interest for holy things in the hearts of those who are sluggish or indifferent. In leaving you, my anxiety has not been for the strong, or for those who are deeply interested in the best things, but for the weak, for those who are indifferent and careless, those who have never learned to feel the deep prophetic meaning that lies in everything around us, or to long for a holier benediction. We must seek to awaken loftier desires in them. We must strengthen them. We must help them forward. We must train and educate the young. We must encourage the desponding, and call back the erring. We must comfort the afflicted by opening their hearts to the hopes and consolations of the Gospel of Christ. We must seek out the needy and the suffering, and

help those who are in any way connected with or dependent upon us. A living church of Christ, endowed with his spirit, proclaiming by word and act the everlasting gospel to every creature within its reach, seeking to save the souls of men, and reveal to them the deeper prophetic meaning of this our human life and all its employments, — a living church of Christ, what a power for good ought it to be in a community! If the churches intended for the people of this town, with differing creeds but in brotherly harmony and with a common purpose, could only come up to the Christ-like idea of what they ought to be in all the offices of appeal, instruction, and moral and religious training, endowed everywhere with the spirit of love and mercy, they would be filled to overflowing. Their beneficent, life-saving influence would be felt directly or indirectly in every home throughout the town. We should look on one another with different eyes. We should meet the terrible trials of life with different emotions. We should see in each child a possible angel. In every branch of industry we should behold, as in a school, the training of immortal spirits. When, amid heavy trials and sorrows, neighbors and friends commune together sadly of the events which have troubled them, we should see a diviner form, as of the Son of man, walking by them, infusing his spirit into them, causing their hearts to burn with higher thoughts and more uplifting emotions. The world around us would shine with a diviner light. Heart would answer to heart, as by the promptings of

God's holy spirit. The grave would have no dominion over us. We should greet our fellow-men, not as frail and dying creatures, but as born of God, and to an everlasting inheritance.

"If only we could have some imperfect conception of the possibilities of love and strength and joy which are included in a human life devoted to the purest ends! Nearly sixteen years ago I had hoped that such a life, early consecrated to what is holiest and best, was to unfold its powers, and to extend its beneficent influences, in this place, through many happy years of usefulness and honor. I could not but rejoice to feel that the lessening rays, which had been seeking to enlighten you here for nearly a generation, would peacefully disappear in the fuller light that was growing upon you. But our fair morning star, while still a star of promise more than of fulfillment, was withdrawn from us, to diffuse its light in other worlds, or to fill its lamp from the eternal fountain.

"Eulogy, it has been said, belongs not to the living, but to the dead. Yet to us the dead still live, and with them we exchange our solemn greetings, as we call to mind the pure and faithful ones who have had their earthly training here amid these beautiful works of God. Better men and women than I have known here, hearts and lives more richly endowed with all Christian virtues and affections, I cannot hope to find, unless it may be my privilege to meet them again in a more advanced stage of being. Meanwhile it is a joy and comfort to think of them, here or elsewhere, as still

alive, and still employed as God's messengers and ministers of love and mercy.

"In the thought of them, we rise above the changes of time and death. We cannot think of them as dead. Our great household poet, who more than any other has sung for us the songs which have been cherished by our firesides, and given new sweetness to the domestic virtues and affections, a few years before his death read, in the college which he had left fifty years before, an exceedingly beautiful poem, of which the keynote is given in the words: —

" ' We who are old, and are about to die,  
Salute you ; hail you ; take your hands in ours,  
And crown you with our welcome as with flowers.' "

There is a wonderful depth of pathos in the words, and a rich and tender interest in the lessons connected with them. But we may carry the thought still further upward.

" ' We who are old, and are about to die,' "

— about to die that we may live forever, — salute you, our companions, on the same high plane of immortality. We who in our most favored moments have been permitted to go up with our Master into the Mountain of Transfiguration, and, with our imperfect vision, to catch some glimpses of the great and saintly ones who, dying years or ages ago, are living still with him, would gladly salute you, and be welcomed with you into their companionship.

" ' We who are old, and are about to die ' ! "

Rather let it be, 'We who are old,' and about to throw off these garments to which the odor of the grave is beginning to attach itself, and to put on the garments of immortality, we to whom the shining portals of eternity are already opening, once more salute you, take your hands in ours, and ask that, in the diviner life into which the richest Christian experiences are transmitting themselves, you may find, here and now, the tokens and assurances of a grander and more perfect life beyond. And as we earnestly desire to help you, so do we also desire you to help us. For, notwithstanding visions of transcendent joy and loveliness which sometimes flash upon us, we feel our weakness and insufficiency. We need your sympathy, your prayers, your faithful and devoted lives, conjoined with ours, that we may advance more steadily towards what is holiest and best.

"And now, my friends, with renewed thankfulness and joy, I leave you with the pastor who has been laboring among you faithfully and unselfishly for the last ten years, and who is to be reinforced by the youthful zeal and hopefulness and strength of one who is to work with him as your minister. Only as you sympathize with them, and show that you take an interest in what most deeply interests them, can their labors in your behalf bear all the fruits which a Christian ministry should bear. It is no far-off prize which they are to gain for you. To make your daily lives here and now more beautiful, to gladden your homes with more disinterested and loving affections, to endow these young



men and women with hopes and desires which shall make them a blessing to themselves and to all who are around them, to bring the infinite Love as a quickening power more effectually into every home and heart, — these are the purposes to which this church and its ministers are consecrated. The kingdom which they would establish is not of this world. But with its light and love from higher worlds it would fill, adorn, and enrich every interest in life. It comes with its gracious gifts and promises from above. It would enfold us round about with its eternal Presence. It would breathe into us a diviner peace, and be within us a blessed communion of the soul of man with the spirit of God, and with the spirits of just men made perfect.

“ With feelings sanctified by associations and friendships which can never die, I would now leave you and this house of prayer with words only of benediction and exhortation : —

“ ‘ The Lord bless thee and keep thee ; the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee ; the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.’ ”

“ ‘ Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace ; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.’ ”

The words of the Parish Committee had proved prophetic, and Dr. Morison’s resignation from the Milton society had been but a form. Relations grew up between him and Mr. Stebbins somewhat

like those which he had held with Mr. Washburn. Although in summer he attended the Peterborough church, from which he never transferred his membership, and in winter attended the First Church in Boston, he also regarded Mr. Stebbins as his minister. Mr. Frothingham died in 1891. In February 1894, the nominal relationship with the parish was reëstablished by a formal vote by which Dr. Morison was made Pastor Emeritus.

Dr. Morison never prepared the small work on the study of the Gospels which he had hoped would be better than anything he had ever done. His study of the poets in connection with his strong religious feelings led to the preparation of a series of papers which he first spoke of as the *Imagination in Religion*. Some of these papers were read in private houses, and he finally completed them in the form of a book which he entitled "*The Great Poets as Religious Teachers*." This little volume, published in the latter part of 1885, was his last book.

Soon after moving to Milton Dr. Morison had become a member of the Boston Association of Ministers, an organization dating back to the seventeenth century. With his removal to Boston his interest in this organization increased, and he almost always attended its monthly meetings.

In 1880 he became a member of the Ministers'

Club, an organization comprising a number of leading ministers from different denominations. This club met monthly at the houses of its members, and its meetings were among the occasions in which he took most satisfaction. The following lines from a letter by an Episcopal member of the club shows how he was regarded there : —

“ His talk at the Ministers’ Club was to me the very best that was offered, so that after hearing him I felt the inspiration long after. No one else gave just what he could give, or could occupy his high and spiritual point of vision. He impressed me with the force of those words, ‘our conversation is in heaven,’ as if the veil might be lifted and reveal that we were grasping the eternal reality beneath all the imperfection of human language.”

While another member, a prominent Orthodox Congregational clergyman, wrote : —

“ Dr. Morison was honored and loved by every one who knew him, and he remains in my thought of him as one of the finest spirits whom I have ever known.

“ He had more of heaven about him, and less of earth, than almost any person I have known ; full of beautiful insight, beautiful feeling, high purpose, and loving and undisturbed trust in God.”

On the 5th of March, 1891, he read the following essay before this club : —

## ETERNAL LIFE.

"I take it for granted that as Christian ministers we all believe in the life eternal. But, while we believe, we sometimes find it hard to realize the fact implied in that belief. What I propose in this paper is to suggest, within a narrow range, some incidental methods or processes by which a sense of personal immortality may enter into our daily consciousness so as to become a constant and vital factor in our lives.

"The first great difficulty in this matter arises from the want of some distinct conception of life in its ongoings here and hereafter. My friend dies. I believe that he is still alive. But how does he live? That is a question that is to be solved at first by our own personal experience. The eternal life lies at the centre of our spiritual being. When a man's spiritual nature is quickened he is born, of the spirit, into that higher life. With his progressive advancement into what is spiritual or eternal, he has growing in himself the consciousness of a life quite apart from the vicissitudes of his mortal environment, and which allies him more and more vitally with things unseen and eternal.

"This is the great idea revealed to us by our Saviour, which runs as an electric thread through all his teachings, and which shows itself especially in the Fourth Gospel: 'I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.' (John x. 10.) Our inmost life has its source and its being in what is eternal. Time and change

and death are but ephemeral phenomena passing over the faithful soul, helping or hindering it in its further development, but having no power to destroy it, if it is but true to its deepest convictions. To be born into this life by the quickening of our inmost faculties, and to follow its deepest and holiest intimations, — that is, to live and believe in him who is the resurrection and the life, — is the one essential condition for making our belief in immortality real and effective to us. In this way, and in this way only, our highest religious thought verifies itself to us, as in a scientific test, by an experimental process. To one who thus lives in obedience to its laws, the thought of the eternal life can never come as a strange thought. It enters into his daily consciousness. When our friend who has been living thus dies, if we have sympathized with him, we realize the significant fact that death dissolves the outside envelope only that in his inmost life he may be free to pass on. As in a seed, during his earthly existence the germ of a divine life has been fostering its secret energies, and developing within the material body an organization adapted to a more advanced stage of existence. And in this finer organization, this spiritual body, he passes on by an act of evolution through what is visible and mortal to what is unseen and eternal.

“If we cannot tell precisely what this spiritual body with the life which animates it may be, no more can we tell precisely what this material body is and the life by which it is quickened. St. Paul,



in his remarkable exposition of the subject, evolving from the material body as from a seed the germ of a diviner organism, till it is transformed into a spiritual body, thus far follows what seems to be the order of nature. But when he adds, 'for this corruptible must put on incorruption,' etc., he departs from a strictly logical process of thought. The new organization is no longer reached, as in the quickening of a seed, by an evolution from within, but it is something put on from without, as a garment. Beautiful and impressive as this grand climax is, the unity of the thought is impaired by these two somewhat incongruous suppositions. If he had adhered to his first method, it would have been more in keeping with our Saviour's teaching: 'Except a grain of wheat fall to the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit.' It is through death, that is, through the dissolution of the physical body, that the soul in its spiritual body is evolved so as to attain to its higher condition of being.

"I attach no great importance to any specific details that we may conceive in our speculations on this subject. Some sort of a body there must be. The soul of man as a spiritual entity, with no organic form, no organs by which to act or manifest itself, is to me inconceivable as representing a personal being. But a spiritual body, — what is that? Are not the terms *spiritual* and *body* incongruous? We hardly know enough of what is intrinsically involved in these terms to affirm that they may not belong to the same essence. Every

year the most adventurous explorations of science are reaching farther into the realm of substances intangible and invisible, and are beginning more and more to imagine, or to recognize it as a fact, that in this realm probably are the ruling forces of the physical universe. Very unsubstantial to the finer perceptions of the foremost naturalists are the distinctions which separate science from philosophy, the laws and forces of the material world from the laws and forces of the intellectual and moral world. Matter and spirit, in their last analysis, may be found to be the same substance or essence in its different stages of development.

“In thinking, then, of our friends who have passed beyond the reach of our mortal vision, we may follow them on in the form that is most natural to us, that is, usually a form not unlike that to which we have been accustomed. By thinking of them as still alive we acquire a habit of thought which recognizes death as only an incident in their progressive advancement. When they leave us, and our hearts are most deeply affected, and we long most intensely for their sympathy and fellowship, we may follow them till they have a permanent place in our minds. The habit of thus living with them will tend to strengthen our faith, to purify our hearts, and lift us up into a higher plane of thought and life. As the spiritual — that is, the eternal — life is unfolded, and becomes the life of our lives, the kingdom not of this world, in which Jesus lived, becomes more the home in which we live. In our most inspired moments, when we look

most clearly through the shadows of time and sense into what is heavenly and divine, we turn our thoughts in this direction, and abide there till the world which is of too fine a texture to affect our mortal senses becomes the one substantial reality which more than anything else draws our souls upward. For there is the one supreme object of adoration and worship. There is the one Mediator between God and men, in whom is revealed all of God that can be manifested to us through a human form and life. And there are not only the saintly ones of past ages 'in solemn troops and sweet societies,' but there, as we advance in years, are gathering most of those whom we have loved and honored while they were with us here, and who, transfigured by death, have helped to keep alive in us desires and affections which may bring down something of the sanctities of heaven to abide with us here in our hearts and homes.

"The habit of following our friends in our thoughts reverently and lovingly, as they pass upward into this great fellowship of souls, may certainly help to do away with, or at least to mitigate, the sense of loneliness and desolation which would otherwise be caused by their departure; while it may do much to make the eternal life — the life of the soul, in which we seek to live — as real to our inmost consciousness as the other life that is going on within us and around us. And one of these lives will be no more mysterious and incomprehensible than the other.

"As an illustration and confirmation of what I

mean, I would mention an incident which I have treasured up among the most sacred and beneficent experiences of life. When I was a schoolboy it was my great privilege to have my home in the family of a distant relative, an aged man of extraordinary gifts and attainments. His wife had recently died. His only son, a gifted and fascinating young man, was fatally ill. His only daughter — a lady of rare personal beauty, and as perfect a specimen as I have ever known of what a richly endowed, unselfish, and thoughtful woman, in the full maturity of her womanhood, can be — was the presiding genius of the house, and an object of grateful and loving reverence to us all. But in the early summer she died. It was my first bitter experience with death, and seemed to throw its deadly blight over everything around me. Nature, in all its June-tide affluence of life and beauty, only aggravated the sense of loss. I had no longer any heart for the studies in which I had been most deeply interested. The Bible was the only religious book that I had ever read with a vivid sense of its profound significance. Guided, so far as I can remember, not so much by any distinct expressions as by the general tone of our Saviour's teachings which indicated the intimate relations between himself and the unseen world around him, I could not but think of my friend as already admitted to that goodly companionship. Gradually a great change came over me in my inmost thoughts. The kingdom of heaven was no longer afar off. Its softer light was all around me. It gave a new attractiveness to

the woods and streams in my solitary walks. It interfused something of its loving spirit into my secret thoughts and emotions, and gradually, I know not how, gave a richer coloring and a holier sense of reality to the highest conceptions I could form of the life beyond. From that time, death, which always before had haunted me with doubts or as a ghastly dream, has been robbed of its terrors and welcomed as a messenger of peace.

“While I was questioning the propriety of bringing forward my own personal experiences in a paper of this kind, I happened, in opening a small volume entitled ‘Four Great Teachers,’ to hit upon a letter of Robert Browning’s. It was written to a lady who in a dying condition had applied to him for something that might be a help to her in her last hours. At the time of his wife’s death he had recorded in her Testament what Dante had written after the death of his Beatrice, and now in his message to this dying friend he thus refers to it: ‘As when Dante wrote what I will transcribe from my wife’s Testament, wherein I recorded it fourteen years ago, “Thus I believe, thus I affirm, thus I am certain it is, that from this life I shall pass to another better, there, where that lady lives of whom my soul was enamored.”’

“Here, and more powerfully indeed in the whole structure of his great work, — the greatest single poem that ever came from the mind of man, — we see how Dante was drawn upward by his loving reverence for the purest spirit that he had ever known. And, prepared by this discipline, as Mr. Lowell has



said, he has shown us 'the way by which that country far beyond the stars may be reached, — may become the habitual dwelling-place and fortress of our nature, instead of being the object of its vague aspiration in moments of indolence.' Sustained by such an authority, I could not regard the method which I have suggested as a childish fancy or device. But, if Dante should be looked upon as led away by the dreams of a superstitious age, we have only to add the endorsement of his method by Robert Browning. If after nearly six centuries, in a different land, surrounded by different forms of worship, in the midst of a wholly different civilization, another great poet, of a wholly different temperament and different mental organization, as well as different habits of thought, a *man* of the largest and most masculine dimensions, could use his words as ministering to his own spiritual wants in his severest affliction, and fourteen years afterwards could think of no better message to send to a dying friend, it is not for us to think lightly of them or of the lesson they teach. We, too, in our deepest experiences of pain and grief, may find a world of comfort in following our dear and saintly ones with heartfelt prayers and benedictions, as they, 'from flesh to spirit changed,' rise from earth to heaven. We also may rise with them, obeying the inward promptings which bind us still to those whom we have loved and honored here, and who 'are numbered now with the saints in glory everlasting.'

"Heaven is thus brought nearer to us. I know

that these conceptions of a higher life are at best poetic fancies, ideal pictures, but as such they associate themselves with spiritual truths so as to touch our hearts, awakening our deepest affections, and drawing us towards what is holy and divine. Still it is said they are unreal and imperfect symbols only. Yes, and what else but unreal and imperfect symbols are the truest conceptions which the greatest minds can form even of the boundless *material* universe in which we live? The image of the sun, with its mysterious effluences of light and heat, in all its wonderful operations throughout the solar system as portrayed by the most far-seeing astronomer, is only an unreal and imperfect symbol of what the sun and its vital agencies really are in themselves, and the forces with which they are endowed. And in the realm of spiritual agencies, what else but unreal and imperfect symbols are the highest conceptions that we, or the most gifted minds, can form of these things? What else are the sublimest visions of poets and prophets? What else the divinest teachings even of him who spake as never man, before or since, has spoken? What else are the most uplifting and inspiring passages we read in the Gospels, the Epistles, or the Apocalypse but symbols unreal and imperfect, as they must be from the limitations of our human language, but pointing upward, as do the sun, the stars, and the soul of man, towards the greatest, and to us the most vital and substantial, of all realities?

“But is not this whole matter of an intermediate realm of spiritual agents between us and God

merely a poetic fancy? Have we any good reason for believing in it as an actual fact? I cannot but think that science itself, in its most important advances and disclosures, is pointing very decidedly in this direction. If, in its most significant discoveries, science has established or divined any one universal fact, it is the bond of relationship which exists among all known substances on the earth or in the heavens. From Newton to Darwin, every great discovery has tended to show that all these substances belong to the same family, and are governed by the same laws. And have we any reason to suppose that this unity of fellowship and design should be confined to material things? Shall the spectroscope recognize the presence of kindred substances in distant planets? shall every particle of matter here respond to the attraction of kindred particles in the remotest heavens? shall the earth be bound by kindred laws to Venus and Saturn, and answer with ready sympathy to the sweet influences of Pleiades, and man alone, the highest visible creation of God, have no relationship with kindred beings above himself? While the heavens are everywhere filled with kindred bodies answering to one another, is it reasonable to suppose that the vast interval that lies intellectually and spiritually between man and God should be one boundless realm of loneliness and desolation? Shall 'the morning stars sing together' and 'no sons of God' be found, through all these infinite spaces, to answer back with their shout of joy? Or shall we accept the teachings of Jesus as in accordance with

the sublimest discoveries of science, and be gladdened by the thought of spiritual relationships between earth and heaven; feeling, as we look into the face of 'one of his little ones' here, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of his Father who is in heaven, and that 'there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth'? Surely it is more reasonable for us to believe that when Jesus turned his eyes with open vision heavenward, he did not look up through dreary spaces, enlivened by no kindred spirits, but rather, as Mr. Emerson has said, 'beheld

“ ‘ Heaven’s numerous hierarchy span  
The mystic gulf from God to man.’

“The words of Jesus take us up into the purest ideal realm ever presented to the mind of man. But we do not feel those words as we ought till we witness their perfect illustration and embodiment in himself. And even that sublime embodiment of truth and life would fail to have its full influence if its lessons were not brought home to us by the most saintly of his followers in past ages, and perhaps even more in our personal relations with those whom we love and reverence as most richly endowed with his spirit. The home, the church, the community, which is blessed by such Christ-like examples in the varied discipline and experiences of life, has advantages of Christian inspiration and instruction which can hardly come through other and higher agencies. And when these friends, amid our prayers and tears, are taken up into the joys

and sanetities of a higher realm, we need them still

“ ‘As messengers of love [O God] between  
Our human hearts and thee.’

When they who once bore the image of the earthly shall bear the image of the heavenly, they may be clothed in bodies of too fine a texture to be seen by mortal eyes. They may be endowed with facilities of motion as swift as the sunbeams, and with organs of vision transcending our powers of conception. And, so equipped, they who once wound themselves into the very life of our lives, and brought so much of heaven with them into our homes, may still live on, angels themselves among the angels of God, and, like them, with a tender interest and guardian thoughtfulness for us. And is it not well for us on our side, in our secret thoughts, to keep alive some sense of our continuous relationship with them?

“I do not think of these relationships with the same assurance that I do of the immediate presence of God, or attach to them anything like the same value. But I do feel that in the communion of saints — of our saintly ones — there is laid open to us, through the imagination at least, a world which is in harmony with our Saviour’s teachings, and which appeals very tenderly to our better sympathies and affections. As we accustom ourselves to dwell in that world with those who have entered there, we may be cherishing ideas and associations which cannot but purify our hearts, enlarge our spiritual conceptions, and so help to draw us into



more vital relations with Christ and with Him who is his Father and our Father, and his God and our God.

“But in speculations like these we must be upon our guard. Different minds act by different methods, and are acted upon by different incentives. That which is a help to one may be a hindrance to another. The views which I have suggested, possibly with undue emphasis, even if true, are only subordinate truths, and, if allowed to take the foremost place in our minds, they are no longer true. A longing for immediate intercourse with those we have loved may be so excessive as to make us impatient of the only legitimate way by which to approach them, and then it can end only in disappointment or illusion. The communion of saints may be a salutary truth, but the worship of saints or of angels is idolatry. Subsidiary views, *as such*, may be helpful, but they must never be allowed to supplant the great central truths and influences by which alone the souls of men are to be saved, and the world redeemed and sanctified.”

On March 28, 1891, Dr. Morison preached in King's Chapel in Boston a sermon from the text, “But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel” (Luke xxiv. 21), which he had written specially for this occasion.

On the 21st of October, 1891, Dr. and Mrs. Morison celebrated in a simple way their golden wedding. Among the interesting features of the

day was a box of gold sent by the members of his two parishes, with an engrossed list representing fifty people from New Bedford, where his active ministry had terminated forty-eight years before, and more than a hundred from Milton.

The last time that Dr. Morison ever spoke in public was at the dedication of the Peterborough Town Library. He always took a great interest in this library. In his centennial address in 1839 he said: —

“Our libraries demand a moment’s attention. There had been previously a library of a similar character; but as early as 1811 the Peterborough Social Library was got up, containing not far from one hundred volumes. So judicious a selection I have never seen. There was hardly a book which did not deserve its place. I well remember the astonishment with which, at the age of eleven, I first looked on what seemed to me such an immense collection of books; nor can I soon forget the uniform kindness with which my early reading was encouraged, and in some measure directed, by the librarian, Daniel Abbot. In an intellectual point of view, I look back on no period of my life with so much satisfaction as on the two years when, at the age of fourteen and fifteen, I lived with Samuel Templeton, as honest a man as this or any town has ever produced. During the hour which he always gave me at noon, and in the evening by firelight, I read the standard histories in our

language, and made myself acquainted with the important events of the ancient world. When a volume was finished, I would set out at dark after a hard day's work, walk three miles to the village, and, enriched with a new treasure, would return, almost unmindful of the woods and their near vicinity to the graveyard and old meeting-house, which, especially on a wintry autumnal night, standing there naked, black, and lonely, was, as I know full well, a fearful object to a child. The Peterborough Social Library became gradually neglected, and was sold about 1830, when a new library on the same plan was got up, and contains now about three hundred volumes."

The Peterborough Town Library rightly claims to be the oldest library of its class in the country or in the world. The library had been housed in various places until in 1891 Mrs. Nancy S. Foster, of Chicago, and Mr. William H. Smith, of Alton, Ill., natives of Peterborough, and grandchildren of William Smith and Elizabeth Morison, made generous gifts to erect a permanent structure for this library. Both Mrs. Foster and Mr. Smith were born in the same year as Dr. Morison; although he did not contribute to its cost, the gift of the library building was really due to him. The matter was placed by them in the hands of Dr. Morison's oldest son, who directed the construction of a building, and provided a part of its cost. The

building was erected in 1892, and the library was moved into it early in the following year. The formal dedication exercises took place in the Peterborough Town Hall on the 5th of October, 1893. After the more formal exercises, the closing remarks were made by Dr. Morison, who spoke particularly of the Smith family as he remembered them as a boy and as a man. His thoughts seemed to carry him away ; he had expected to speak less than ten minutes, but he continued for half an hour. At times those who sat near him felt afraid that he could not get through ; his reminiscences had awakened the tenderest emotions in his own mind, and he transferred these to his hearers. No record was kept of his words, but those who heard him then will never forget the earnestness of his last public utterance.

## X

### THE END

OF Dr. Morison's two sisters, the younger, Caroline, had died in Michigan in 1849, and the older, Eliza, in Peterborough in 1867. Of his four brothers, Horace, the oldest, died in Peterborough in 1870; James, the youngest, in Quincy in 1882; and Nathaniel in Baltimore in 1890. The other brother, Samuel, the twin of James, whose home had been in California for more than forty years, died there in 1893. Dr. Morison, the oldest of the five brothers, was left the only survivor of his generation. His health had never been better; he was a vigorous old man. In the summers he was in the habit of driving about Peterborough, and in the winters he took long walks in Boston.

On the 22d of January, 1894, while returning from a visit at dusk, he was knocked down by an express wagon on Boylston Street, the end of the shaft striking him immediately over the eye. He walked home, and the injuries were apparently not very serious, though it took him some time to recover. He apparently got well, but the shock



had affected his heart in a way which he never understood.

Early in the morning of Saturday, March 7, 1896, Dr. Morison had a stroke of apoplexy ; it occurred soon after midnight, when he was found unconscious on the floor of his chamber in Boston. He rallied from the attack, recovered consciousness during the day, and improved slowly. His two sons and his daughter-in-law were in the city of Mexico, but they started for Boston on the next day, and arrived on the Saturday following the stroke. He continued to improve, with some slight setbacks, for several weeks. Though much of the time he spoke rationally, his mind was not entirely clear, and it was apparent that, however much he might regain his physical strength, it was not probable that he would ever recover his full mental faculties. He could not fully realize where he was, but generally seemed to think he was in Peterborough. On the 20th of April there occurred a decided change, and from this time he failed steadily. On Friday the 24th he ceased to take nourishment, and from this time onward he was entirely unconscious. On Sunday morning, April 26, at 10.25 o'clock, he ceased to breathe. The windows were open, and the sound of the morning church-bells came in ; the sound came from the chimes of the Arlington Street Church, the church

of Dr. Channing, who had such an influence on Dr. Morison's early life ; it seemed specially fitting that the bells of this church should be so associated with his last moments on earth.

On Tuesday, April 28, after a brief service at the house in Marlborough Street, the body was taken to the Milton church, which was filled with his old parishioners and many other friends. Five clergymen, among them the minister of his New Bedford church, and one of his nephews, bore the casket to its place in front of the pulpit where he had preached for so many years. It was in front of this pulpit that his face was seen for the last time. The services were conducted by Rev. Roderick Stebbins, who also made the following address : —

“ If it be true that the most sacred spot on earth to civilized man is his home, then to a minister there is a second like unto it, namely, his church ; for the faithful minister ever carries his church near his heart, thinking day and night what he can do to make it more serviceable to mankind. A man who held this place very dear, a minister who worshiped, taught, and prayed here many years, has gone from among us. When the bells he was accustomed to hear were ringing the call to service, his spirit answered a heavenly summons.

“ It is fitting that hither we come, where the

associations and memories of the past, the hopes of the future, the spirit of love and faith dear to him, may hush our disturbing thoughts, and temper our private griefs to finer issues.

“To many of you, his name and form have been familiar for a long period of years. To many he has been the type of all good ministers, from whose holiness benedictions have rested in abundant measure upon your sorrows and your joys. To me, whom he welcomed to this church nearly ten years ago, he has been a constant and sympathetic friend. Your knowledge of him, better than mine, makes it unnecessary for me to refresh your minds in regard to the facts of the life that is ended for us here. There are, however, some things so characteristic of him, and that belonged to his rare nature, that we may well recall them at this time.

“The first of these was his affection and devotion to this church. He regarded it with a love that came from his years of faithful service and from the close and tender relations he bore to the families worshiping here. The expressions of your affection for him were a source of great happiness in these later years, when his period of active service was over. The anniversaries that you remembered, the flowers you sent, and, in his own words, ‘the thought and affection, sweeter than the flowers,’ helped to round out the completed happiness of his days.

“It is fifty years since he first stood in this place as your minister; and during all that time, while nearly two generations have come and gone, this

church has been the one above all others to which his thoughts most affectionately turned. In these days, when the relations between minister and people are more easily broken than they used to be, it is good to think of this man, for half a century the minister of this church. It is good to think of this church, for half a century loyal to this man. My knowledge of him was in his home, where he was the simple, sincere, and gracious friend. His mind — alert, active, interested in scholarly pursuits and in the questions of the day — made him an instructive and valued companion. His spirit gave the atmosphere to the home, and set the key of reverence and of love to which the life of the household was attuned. He was the most guileless and ingenuous of men. He looked upon the world as his friend. He expected good from it, and good only did he receive; for, if by chance a rudeness or a slight came his way, he did not perceive it, but went on, unconscious of a breath of criticism or dispraise. Therefore his life was happy from the inherent simplicity and purity of his own heart.

“And in outward circumstances, in the love and devotion of those near him, in the vicissitudes of human fortune, he was happy beyond the common lot of man. Once, as we walked together over Milton Hill, and looked across the valley to the sea beyond, he repeated the lines of Addison’s hymn, —

“ ‘Where peaceful rivers soft and slow  
Amid the verdant landscape flow.’

No better could the tranquillity of his own life be

described, so many years of which were passed near that favored spot.

“Many of us need the chastening experience of great ills to quicken our spirit and manly qualities ; but here was a man whose grateful heart was conscious of his blessings before they were withdrawn, and who in prosperity and in peace thanked God for his abundant mercies.

“Though sheltered thus from many of the misfortunes of life, and by his own nature gentle and single-minded, there was no weakness in him. He had the manliness of a strong nature, of a mind dwelling in the heights of moral being, of a heart resting on a supreme faith in God. He was imbued with a deep religious spirit, that seemed to make his life and thought a kind of offshoot from the providence of God.

“And so, when I think of him, it is with affection, with gratitude, and with praise. I am at peace. All is well, and he who was so strong in faith shall reassure my weaker trust, until like him I shall look upon death as God’s way to light and life.”

The body was then taken to the Milton graveyard. Forty years before, his children had been fond of playing under a big pine-tree in a pasture. This pasture had been added to the graveyard, and when this was done Dr. Morison had selected the lot on which this tree grew. The body of his beloved colleague, Mr. Washburn, had been buried



in this lot, and here what remained of the senior pastor was laid away, "in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ."

After preaching his last sermon, Dr. Morison expressed a wish to preach a sermon on the *Joy of Life*. He wrote this sermon in Peterborough in 1893, expecting to preach it in Milton in October, but he was not able to do so. He took great satisfaction in writing this sermon, and he worked over it from time to time, hoping to preach it; it was left in this way when he died.

On the Sunday after the funeral Mr. Stebbins read this sermon at the morning services in the Milton church. On the following Sunday, May 10, 1896, Rev. A. W. Jackson delivered the same sermon in the church at Peterborough, preceding it with some remarks of his own. The sermon, with Mr. Jackson's remarks, forms a fitting close to this volume:—

"It seems most fitting that the services of to-day should be a memorial of Dr. Morison. For not only was he a man widely known, and honored and revered and loved wherever known, but in a special sense he belonged to you. Very early in my ministry here, I discovered in him a peculiar interest in this church,—an interest that deepened as

years went on. His presence here, too, whether in pew or in pulpit, was a grace of which you were deeply sensible. And I am not surprised to see the proportions of this audience considerably increased by members of other churches who have come in ; for Dr. Morison belonged not merely to this church, but to this town. Peterborough has sterile acres ; her corn and wheat she cannot boast ; but she has been singularly productive of strong and useful men. Yet of all the noble array, as I judge men, no one has more honored the town than he. By instinct a scholar, in mental outlook large, of practical wisdom and broad and affluent sympathy, of unbending rectitude, and with soul reaching upward and ever upward, if, as you make up your jewels, you feel that he was of them all the fairest, I can only agree with you.

“ It is hard to have opportunity to speak of such a character and not bear testimony. But it is hard also to select the terms in which testimony shall be borne, especially when so many graces meet and are so harmoniously blended, and emphasizing anything seems so like slighting other things as deserving to be emphasized. Most men, whom we honor, in some respects disappoint us, and we apologize while we praise. Our heroes are apt to be rude and our saints to be sickly. Here, however, was a hero who was a gentleman, and a saint who was well. The saint you readily admit ; all the atmosphere of the man was suggestive of the type of character you know as the saintly. And as his atmosphere, so his life and work. When

Father Hyacinthe was in this country, a clergyman said to him: 'Well, after all, it is the simple duty of the minister to point men to Christ.' 'No,' said Father Hyacinthe, 'it is to be Christ to them.' That such was Dr. Morison, you know; with him you felt the presence of the Master whom he loved and served. But the hero, — how of that? He was a man of peace; his ministry, which was his life, was a ministry of reconciliation. But do you suppose he was never sensible of a whisper in his ear, 'All these things will I give unto thee if thou wilt fall down and worship me'? The moral poise and dignity you marked in him were the result of moral victories won, it may well have been, where the fight was hard.

"We often celebrate unity of character as something exceptional and unique. Strictly speaking, I do not suppose it so; most men, if we only knew them, should be found, even when their actions are inconsistent with one another, yet consistent with themselves. It is the unifying principle, not the unity, by which men are most distinguished; and what that was in this dear friend it is not possible that you do not know. Up in Dublin they tell a pleasant story of Dr. Bartol, who preached there one summer Sunday morning. He announced his text: 'A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump;' and then, looking over the congregation, he quaintly remarked, 'We don't want much religion.' Pausing for this unusual proposition to carry its full effect, he went on: 'We only want a little, but we want that little all through.' Dr. Morison's religion,

call it little or call it much, was all through. This was his unifying principle ; in this his heroism and his saintliness are alike explained. In his daily conduct, in his benevolences, in his courtesies, in his 'little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love,' it was manifest.

"But it is not to me, but to him, that you have come to listen. Though through my lips, he will again speak to you. The sermon I bring you is the last he ever wrote. It was written about two years ago, with intent that it should be his last, for his Milton congregation. Strength failed, and he was never able to preach it. It was therefore read to the Milton congregation last Sunday morning, and it seems eminently appropriate that I should bring it here to-day. It is an old man's account of the joy of life. Many even in more vigorous years gloomily question whether life is worth living. To such it must be especially well, and to all surely profitable, to hear what this octogenarian could say.

These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. — John xv. 11.

"The distinguished scholar and writer, Ernest Renan, once stated as a remarkable fact, that no literature in the world has ever made such frequent use of the word "joy" as the New Testament. He might also have added that no literature in the world had ever given such depth and fullness of meaning to the word as the New Testament. However encompassed the religion of Jesus may have been by men professing to be his disciples, that religion, in its

very nature, as it was lived and taught by him and his immediate followers, was preëminently a joyful religion. It was originally announced as tidings of great joy. And whenever it takes possession of the whole man, awakening all his powers of mind and heart, it more than anything else opens within him the sources of a higher life and a more steadfast joy.

““ We are born here into a material environment. Our lower faculties are first awakened. There is a joy in this awakening of the senses, and a still higher joy in the awakening and exercise of the intellect and the affections. In a healthy nature there is a glow of happiness in every experiment of living, and the consequent further development of thought and feeling. But with the development of our higher faculties, we feel straitened and cramped by the limitations of the world around us. Science, in its wonderful progress, advancing through gross material agencies to those which are more refined, slowly learns that the mightiest processes in nature, the motions of planets and stars, the growth of plants, the physical life of animals and men, and above all the unfolding faculties of the human soul, are moved and governed by agencies and laws which no eye hath seen and no one of our senses can divine. Here are intimations or outshadowings of a presence, an agency, embracing the material universe, interfusing itself everywhere as the latent central force, or quickening life, of all that we can see or know. Here are intimations of a power without which no other can



exist. Here are intimations, and some day through the keener insight of science in its further advances there may be demonstrations, of a life without which no plant can grow, no human soul can awake to a consciousness of the deeper significance of all this world in which we live, or catch more than uncertain glimmerings of the divine light in which the beauty of the rose, the stars, and "the human face divine," may be seen when transfigured to us as they really are in the higher developments of our faculties.

" ' Now here to us, because of the incompleteness of knowledge in which we are left amid these yet unfinished explorations of science, is where our religion comes in with its higher and more beneficent ministrations. It takes a child by the hand, and shows him the lilies of the field how they grow, and this leads him to a recognition of One who, himself unseen, clothes them with a beauty beyond the reach of our human art. We are thus placed in an ideal realm, and yet a realm filled out and quickened by the most substantial and life-giving of all realities. Thus it is that Jesus, by his life and teachings, would prepare us to recognize and worship Him in whom we live and move and have our being. By methods in harmony with the laws of our being, he would bring us more and more into vital relations with them. Thus we are made to feel more and more that we are compassed about by the laws and agencies of a spiritual kingdom. As we, in our higher natures, are born into this higher realm, conceptions of a joy unknown to us

in our lower experiences arise before us, and, in the light which they throw around us, this material world assumes a new significance. To our awakened sensibilities and larger conceptions, the visible universe moves on with a diviner harmony, and we are prepared to respond with a deeper joy. Now, visionary as these views may appear to those who see them only from afar, and unreal as they may be in their literal interpretation, in their essence, in their legitimate influence on the souls of men, and in our highest experiences, they are the most substantial and the most vital of all realities. Here, in the presence of things "eternal, immortal, and invisible," we have some foretaste of what is meant by the words of our Saviour, "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full."

"But I wish here and to-day to treat my subject in the most simple and practical manner, and to show, though in a superficial way, how these words, which in their fullness go down into the deepest, holiest experiences possible to men, may also connect themselves with our common, everyday pursuits. We all desire to be happy. But the most sensible and practical of men often engage with all their hearts, and spend the better part of their lives, in enterprises which can end only in disappointment. When the transient excitements of success have subsided, their occupation is gone, and nothing satisfactory remains. I have sometimes thought that the greatest disappointments in life come to those who are thought to be most

successful. That to which they have been looking forward with intense desire, and for which they have been striving long and earnestly, loses its charm when it is gained. The bird which was so attractive when on the wing is secured, and as we hold it in our hands the poor, lifeless thing awakens in us only a feeling of sadness or self-reproach.

“We would be happy. We are endowed with faculties which, rightly exercised, cannot fail to make us so. They point to other exercises which excite within us pleasurable sensations, and which would lead us on from day to day to something better still. Enterprises which awaken thoughts, emotions, affections, such as purify the atmosphere in which we live, while increasing the opportunities within our reach, increase also our powers of using and of enjoying them. If we thus live wisely and not selfishly, seeking whatsoever things are honest, true, and lovely, we shall, with constantly growing sense of enjoyment, work our way upward. New resources of interest and pleasure will be opening before us, and offering themselves to us to be used as new means of usefulness to others and of happiness to ourselves.

“This life, which I have endeavored to suggest by broken intimations rather than by any direct description, is a life which in its fullness is not unlike that which is pervaded, inspired, and animated by the thoughts and the life of Jesus. It is a life of progress, both in itself and in its satisfactions and enjoyments. We are imperfect, but working our way upward. We have the faults of our qual-

ity, and suffer the consequences till we subdue them. But even here we are not forsaken. We sometimes take the wrong path, and with painful and uncertain steps, as one who has lost his way in a wilderness. But we try to find it again. And if there is grief in losing, there is joy in regaining it.

“ ‘ Sometimes we make willful mistakes. But even then, in the bitterness of self-reproach, in the agony of our repentance because of the wrong that we have done to a friend or neighbor, and most of all to our own better nature, in the very pang of grief which causes us to change our course, and turn our face homewards towards our Father’s house, in the very humiliation with which we prostrate ourselves before Him, there is a sense of relief. And at length, in our perfect reconciliation with God and man, and most of all with our own souls, there is a satisfaction, an intensity of joy, such as we sometimes see in a little child that throws itself all penitence and tears into its mother’s arms, and the two have never before loved each other so dearly, or trusted each other so entirely. And so it may happen that our very failings, and the sufferings consequent upon them, may furnish the occasions on which our tenderest sensibilities may be quickened, and our deepest joys intensified.

“ ‘ A life of cloudless sunshine with no dark or stormy passages, a life of continuous prosperity interrupted by no misdeeds or misgivings, no sharp reproaches of conscience, no torturing pains of body or mind, may seem to be the ideal of what a

Christian life should be. And very lovely in many instances have been the lives which have been formed under such influences. Their ways are ways of pleasantness, and all their paths are peace. But we are not all so constituted. There are capabilities in the soul of man which cannot always be called out, or find their fitting exercise, with such an experience. What would have become of the great qualities of Abraham Lincoln, which place him among the greatest men of all ages, if he had not been made to bear as no other man did in his own heart the sorrows of a whole people in the mighty throes and agitations and slaughter through which they had to pass as the retribution, and as the only means of deliverance from a grievous national sin? There are hopes reaching upward to the very throne of God which could never have attained to such heights of joyous fulfillment were it not for the deep and fearful experiences through which they have passed. In the noblest specimens of humanity there are refinements of nature which never could have been quite so secure in their attachment to what is holiest and best, there are sympathies with the sufferings of others which never could have been quite so tender and so forgetful of self, had it not been for the bodily pains and infirmities in which they have had their birth and training. We are indeed fearfully and wonderfully made. And, sometimes by processes even more fearfully and wonderfully ordained, our noblest faculties are trained to the finest issues, and endowed with capabilities for entering into the deepest, holiest, and



happiest of our Christian experiences. Nor alone in the grander fulfillment of man's immortal destiny in a world yet to come, which is better fitted than this for the advanced training of human beings, shall the song of the redeemed be sung by those who have come out of great tribulation. But even here in their richest and holiest experiences that song has been sung, — nay, it is being sung to-day, by men and women who have done, or who are now doing, what they can to redeem and bless the world. Nor is this confined to the few conspicuous examples. In the common walks of life, among the plain people who claim no peculiar distinction for themselves, these great processes of moral and spiritual refinement are going on. Not silver and gold alone are passing through the fiery furnace, but iron, the most common and useful of all metals, in being subjected to flames even more fierce and searching, is thus endowed with a more delicate fibre, and wrought into a stronger texture.

“ ‘ But, after all, it is in our common duties and relations, and most of all in our homes, that we are to look for the fulfillment of the promise, “that my joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.” In our homes more than anywhere else the great and solemn issues of life, the great and solemn mysteries of life, are working themselves out for weal or woe to us, according to the temper and disposition with which we enter into and fulfill our duties. All other interests are of small account, all other social distinctions and advantages are of small account, compared with the habits and feel-

ings which show themselves in the little, and for the most part unconscious, acts and expressions of kindly interest, and which go so far towards making up the fullness of joy and comfort in a happy Christian home.

“ ‘Next to the home are the hardly more conspicuous and hardly less beneficent influences which come from the thoughtful and kindly offices of good neighborhood. In the country especially, we have found it a matter of very considerable interest to know who are for the season to occupy the two or three vacant houses which are within a mile or two of our home. People who, in their conversation and their lives, know how to answer most effectively the question, “Who is my neighbor?” may in a single season give a new beauty to the landscape, and create a new relationship of thought and kindly affection in those whom they meet. So friendships are sometimes formed which may add no one can tell how much to the joy of living.

“ ‘This thought of neighborly relations admits of a wider application than I have suggested. The question, “Who is my neighbor?” was put evidently by an amiable young man and a man of good intentions. But the answer was more than he was ready to accept. “He was very sorrowful,” we are told, “for he was very rich.” We all of us would like to be rich. With few exceptions among men, the principal business of life lies in this direction. Practically speaking, we are all intent on gaining money. But there are two things to be considered here, or this money-making becomes a perilous busi-

ness. How to make it, is morally as well as financially a momentous question, and it is carefully and generally considered by good men. But how to use it is too often pushed aside. And because men do not meet this question fairly and squarely on generous and Christian grounds, "they empty themselves by their accumulations." While they grow rich outwardly, they become impoverished in the higher qualities and attainments which alone can enrich and satisfy a human soul. Few things reveal to me so painfully the poverty of soul as the purposes for which money is lavishly expended. Whether the amount be great or small, whether the man be poor or rich, the result is the same, — a growing insensibility to the wants of others, and to the higher claims of their own natures; an increasing hardness of heart; a drying up of the generous instincts and affections which should reach out according to their means in narrower or broader offices of brotherly kindness, through mediums not only of private charity or public beneficence, but in enterprises by which a man of large and liberal nature can benefit the community while he is also securing his own interests.

"When I was at Rimini, a half-deserted city in Italy, I saw there a fine triumphal arch erected to the Emperor Augustus as a token of thankfulness from the people because of what he had done to repair their roads. And a little way out from the city there still remains in good condition a bridge which he had caused to be built nearly two thousand years ago. These were to me the most impressive memo-

rials that I saw of what that great man had been, and what he had done for the Roman people. A hundred years ago and more, there lived in Boston and in this town a member of the Federal Street Church there and of this our church. There is possibly no one living here now, since the death of Mr. Charles Breck, the patriarch of the town, who remembers him. The only visible memorial of him that I remember seeing here was the name of John McLean, which a friend had caused to be cut in the milestones of the Brushhill Turnpike to express the gratitude of the people for the improvement which he made in the roads. We know very little of the life he led, except that he was a hard-working, upright, prosperous merchant. In this church, as well as in the Boston church to which he belonged, there is a fund bearing his name for the benefit of needy persons not paupers belonging to the parish. Doubtless, in thinking over the provision which he was thus making to add a little something to the comfort of these people, as the winter of the year and the winter of life was coming on, and this through future generations, his kindly nature was touched, and a glow of satisfaction passed through him. But by the large benefactions which he made in his lifetime, or to take effect after his death, his name and memory became associated almost as their founder with two institutions which have done more perhaps than any other institutions in the land for the relief of human suffering. This certainly may be said of the Massachusetts General Hospital, where ether

was first employed in its beneficent ministry, taking away, as it did, the terror and the pang connected with the most painful of surgical operations.

“ ‘But, not to dwell on this single and rather remarkable case as an illustration of my subject, while standing here I need to speak only of those whom I have known, and whose lives have done so much to purify, enlarge, and intensify my conceptions of the joy that is spoken of in my text. There is a book entitled “The Lives of Twelve Good Men,” which I have read with much satisfaction. But in this small parish, within my personal acquaintance and among those who have been very dear to me, I could name more than twelve good men and women who to my mind stand out as living in harmony with the spirit and the teachings of Jesus, and furnishing, in its essential features and elements, examples of Christian living as true and as inspiring as these which I find among the distinguished divines, — “the twelve good men” of the book I have mentioned. They are all now, I trust, numbered with the saints in glory everlasting. But they also live on here in the hearts and lives of those who knew and loved them. They speak to us of a joy which may touch our deepest emotions, and quicken within us sensibilities to what is holiest and best.

“ ‘But, with all its joys, — and they may be very great, attending us from youth to age, as angels of love and mercy, — this human life of ours has its features of sadness. While it may grow richer in



its satisfactions and enjoyments, it is also attended by incidents, experiences, and memories which touch us with a pathos more tender and affecting as we advance in years. Our companions leave us by the way. But it is not all bereavement. The flowers which filled our spring-time with gladsome expectations faded long ago. But the fruits which were growing out of them when kindly thoughts, unselfish desires, and devout affections transform themselves into deed, have been going on mellowing and ripening through the autumnal days, and greet us with a fullness and maturity of joy, a serenity and peace, hardly known to us in our busier season. We have our tears to shed. But there are tears of joy as well as of grief. And they come from a deeper source, and lift us up into an atmosphere more heavenly and divine. On a beautiful autumnal day, in a public garden, I met a dear friend, whose life — one of the happiest that I have known — had been spent in doing good. He had completed his eightieth year. Not age alone, but a fitful and violent disease, had been breaking in upon his strength of mind and body. He spoke calmly of these increasing infirmities, and of failing powers. Then, in a glow of almost triumph, he added: "For one thing I am most thankful, and that is, that, whatever may fail, my faith in the perfect love and goodness of God never fails." " "



## LIST OF PUBLISHED WRITINGS OF JOHN H. MORISON.

An Address, delivered before the Golden Branch Society of Phillips Exeter Academy, August 22, 1839. Pp. 23. Boston, 1839.

An Address delivered at the Centennial Celebration in Peterborough, N. H., October 24, 1839. Pp. 99. Boston, 1839.

On Prayer. Printed for the American Unitarian Association. Pp. 20. Boston, 1841.

A Sermon on Spiritual Existences. Pp. 11. Boston, 1841.

A Sermon [on the Death of Children], preached before the First Congregational Society, in New Bedford, Sunday Morning, November 27, 1842. Pp. 16. New Bedford, 1842.

Life of the Hon. Jeremiah Smith, LL. D. Member of Congress during Washington's Administration, Judge of the United States Circuit Court, Chief Justice of New Hampshire, etc. Pp. viii, 516. Boston, 1845.

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Our Common Schools. A Discourse preached at Milton, January 30, 1853. Pp. 24. Dedham, 1853.

A Sermon preached in the First Congregational Church, Milton, June 4, 1854. Pp. 18. Boston, 1854.

A Memorial of Rev. Ephraim Peabody, D. D. Pp. 42. Boston, 1857. (Reprinted from *The Christian Examiner and Religious Miscellany*, March, 1857.)

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Charles Sumner. A Sermon, preached in Milton, March, 15, 1874. Pp. 9. [Boston, 1874.] (Reprinted from *The Unitarian Review and Religious Magazine*, April, 1874.)

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